

## Chapter 17

### **New Ways Ministry—A Study in Subversion**

#### **Introduction**

New Ways Ministry was founded by Sister Jeannine Gramick, formerly with the School Sisters of Notre Dame and now with the Sisters of Loretto, and Father Robert Nugent of the Society of the Divine Savior. Second, perhaps, only to the Washington D.C.-based national homosexual group Dignity, New Ways has been the most influential of all the Homosexual Collective's auxiliaries within the Catholic Church. It has served as a critical link between the lesbian feminist covens of female religious orders and the "gay" priesthood and the secular Homosexual Collective.

This in-depth study of New Ways, is the first since Fr. Rueda exposed its machinations in *The Homosexual Network* in 1982. It is as much an indictment against what passes for "religious orders" these days, as it is against New Ways. Both Gramick and Nugent have led a freewheeling existence thanks to the superiors of their respective religious orders, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Salvatorians. Both orders have bankrolled New Ways' operations and aided and abetted its attack on the Church for decades.

The story of Sister Gramick and Father Nugent and New Ways illuminates the complex interplay between homosexual activists in religious orders and the diocesan priesthood, their superiors and bishops in the United States, and Church authorities in Rome.

The history of New Ways documents how AmChurch's interlock of homosexual and "gay friendly" bishops and its vast bureaucracy at the NCCB/USCC (USCCB) has helped to advance the Homosexual Collective's ideology and programs and put its resources at the service of the Collective. Access to the sources of power within a given institution is an essential tool in the subversion process, and New Ways has never lacked for access to the corridors of power within AmChurch.

One of the guiding rules of investigative research is "follow the money trail," but this proved virtually impossible since religious orders are not required to file tax returns. The IRS returns of New Ways and its close affiliate, the Quixote Center, were available, however, and they show how the Homosexual Collective within the Church uses a multiplicity of front organizations to attack and undermine the Catholic Church's opposition to homosexuality.

The most important thing to remember about New Ways is, that despite its religious trappings, it is essentially a political not a religious organi-

zation. It is not a “ministry” in the accepted meaning of the word, hence it is referred to as “New Ways” throughout this book except for direct quotes. Its primary objectives are political in nature and designed to strengthen the role of the Homosexual Collective within the Catholic Church. It is only incidentally religious, that is, it uses religion solely for political ends. That is why all New Ways activities must be viewed principally through a political prism not a religious one.

In the words of its founders, New Ways exists “to explore and develop those areas that for many remain formidable obstacles to an acceptance of homosexual identity and expression as potentially morally good and healthy as heterosexuality in the Judaeo-Christian scheme.”<sup>1</sup>

### **The Transformation of Sister Gramick**

Jeannine Gramick was born in 1942 and grew up in a traditional Catholic family in the Philadelphia area. An only child, Gramick recalls that she was very pious and attended daily Mass. After her high school graduation, she relinquished “a passionate relationship with a young college man,” and at the age of 18 joined the religious order of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND), a branch of the international French Congregation of Notre Dame.<sup>2</sup>

When Gramick entered the convent in 1960, the SSND was by and large still a traditional order, although the continuous promptings of Pope Pius XII to modernize religious life had begun to stir the waters of revolution ever so gently.<sup>3</sup> By the mid-1960s, however, the order was “gone with the wind.” The SSND nuns underwent a period of radical “renewal” comparable to the ill-fated Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles.

The prominent role of the SSND in the building of Women-Church has been well documented by Donna Steichen in *Ungodly Rage—The Hidden Face of Catholic Feminism*.<sup>4</sup> Steichen catalogues the involvement of SSND nuns in a variety of ecumenical/feminist workshops that feature such topics as Mother/Destroyer Archetype Hindu goddess Kali, Wiccan (witchcraft), lesbianism, Creation Spirituality, inclusive liturgical language, “re-productive rights” and the “sin” of sexism.<sup>5</sup> But not to worry. Lay Catholics who keep the order financially solvent can be consoled by the fact that the School Sisters of Notre Dame raise their own organic food on EarthRise Farm as part of their Center for Earth Spirituality at the Mankato Motherhouse in Minnesota.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1960 and 1985 the number of vowed women religious in the SSND fell worldwide from 11,000 to 8,000. By 2003 the number had plummeted to 4,400. Unfortunately, Sister Gramick was not among the dropouts.

In 1968, Sr. Gramick received word that her mother was seriously ill and she returned home to Philadelphia with the approval of her religious superior. While on leave, she decided to take advantage of the SSND’s con-

tinuing teaching education program and enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania as a full-time graduate student to begin her doctorate in mathematics education.

According to Gramick, in 1971, during a “home liturgy” attended mainly by university students, she reported her first encounter with Dominic Bash, a homosexual male friend who “inspired” her calling to minister to her “gay” sisters and brothers. By this time, Gramick, now in her late 20s, was already well indoctrinated into the “theology” of radicalized feminism and lesbianism.

After Gramick returned to Baltimore in 1972, to teach at the College of Notre Dame in Maryland, she helped found Dignity/Washington, D.C.

One year later, with the help of Father Joseph Hughes, a Baltimore diocesan priest, Gramick helped found Dignity/Baltimore. The first Mass for the “Catholic” group was celebrated in the chapel of St. Jerome’s Convent where Jeannine lived with four other SSND sisters, all of whom supported the political objectives of the Homosexual Collective.<sup>7</sup> Dignity/Baltimore continued to meet at the convent until it secured a Catholic parish to hold its services.

Gramick is proud of the fact that she conducted a workshop for lesbians that later inspired the founding of the Conference for Catholic Lesbians.

Gramick’s actions in helping to establish Dignity/Philadelphia, Dignity/Washington, D.C. and Dignity/Baltimore and a lesbian association indicates the degree to which Gramick was politically radicalized *before* she founded New Ways.

In her essay “Lesbians and the Church: Bridging the Gap,” that appeared in the Christian feminist magazine *Daughters of Sarah* in 1988, Gramick recalls her early contacts with the homosexual community in the Philadelphia area and her work with “a sensible and attractive lesbian ex-nun” with whom she developed “a support group for lesbian and gay Catholics.”<sup>8</sup>

Gramick states, “From lesbian women, I also learned that homophobia can be rooted in personal fears and anxieties about one’s own sexuality.”<sup>9</sup> “In the early years of my ministry,” she says, “I remember feeling uncomfortable with a woman because I became conscious of my own same-sex attractions. ...Unless we make friends with our own homosexual passions we will be imprisoned by them,” she concludes.<sup>10</sup> She says society’s “heterosexual bias” and the Church’s “ecclesiastical sexism” and its treatment of homosexuals like Dominic as “outcasts” distressed her.<sup>11</sup>

Gramick’s leadership positions in the National Coalition of American Nuns (NCAN), the first “Catholic” organization to affirm ‘the rights of gay and lesbian people,’ and in the Women’s Ordination Conference (WOC) demonstrates her dual-commitment to the Homosexual Collective and the Lesbian/Feminist Movement.

## Sister Jeannine Tells Her “Story”

My first gay man that I ever met. I met Dominic at a home mass—that was in the days of 70s. And he told me his whole life story—that he left the Catholic Church, he said, because the Catholic Church had nothing to offer him as a gay man. ...Certainly I felt he was greatly discriminated against, but I also felt that somehow he wasn't normal—that was the attitude that I had because that was what society said to me. And that maybe he could change. But after speaking with him, and listening to his story, and he told me he had tried and wanted to be heterosexual and couldn't, I realized that stereotype was just that, a stereotype. Lesbian and gay people can't change their orientation. We struck up a good friendship. And that transformed my entire life.<sup>12</sup>

Sister Jeannine Gramick, June 24, 2001  
CBC Radio Interview “To Live with Courage”

The impression one would get from reading Gramick's story of her first meeting with Dominic Bash in the 2001 Canadian radio interview, is that here was some poor lost soul, a homosexual struggling to find his way home, but finding himself constantly “rebuffed” by the Catholic Church. Gramick never mentions what happened to this young man that she befriended and encouraged to live out his homosexual identity. Permit me to do so.

Dominic Bash was a native of the greater Philadelphia area. He was four years younger than Gramick. After he graduated from North Catholic High School in 1965, he enrolled as a novice with the Fathers of the Oblates of St. Francis DeSales, Wilmington-Philadelphia Province, but was eventually dismissed from the seminary. He tried to get into another seminary, possibly Episcopalian, but was also rejected as a candidate for the ministry, presumably because of his homosexuality.<sup>13</sup>

Dominic took up hairdressing.

By the early 1970s, about the time that Gramick began holding “Eucharistic gatherings” for Bash and his homosexual friends in the Philadelphia area, Bash was heavily into homosexual politics. He, together with Gramick, helped to organize Dignity/Philadelphia, and Bash is recognized today as one of the chapter's founding members and a trailblazer activist for “gay rights.”

In 1991, when the Archdiocese of Philadelphia cracked down on Dignity and prohibited the pro-homosexual group from meeting on Church property, Dominic Bash and Dignity/Philadelphia found a new home at St. Luke and the Epiphany Episcopalian Church in center city Philadelphia.

That same year, Bash made headlines as the City of Brotherly Love's most famous diva. He was the Master of Ceremonies at the Third Annual “Coming Out” Block Party on Pine Street. He came in drag flaunting a tight black skirt, fishnet stockings and a tiara.

Bash also helped organize a demonstration at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul where Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua was holding his first Mass for people with AIDS. Havoc broke loose when one demonstrator (not Bash) dumped condoms on the altar.

In response to the AIDS epidemic, Bash, who later contracted the disease, organized an AIDS ministry within Dignity/Philadelphia.

Sadly, from his seminary days up until his death, Bash insisted that the Catholic Church had never loved him. But Sister Gramick should have known better. She had the opportunity of sharing the Gospel message of repentance and conversion of heart with the young man she called her friend. Instead, she confirmed Dominic in his sin.

Dominic Bash died of AIDS in January 1993 at the age of 47, without the last Sacraments of the Catholic Church. His ashes are buried in a vault at the Episcopal Church of St. Luke and the Epiphany.

### **Father Nugent and his “Story”**

Robert Nugent was born on July 31, 1937, and educated in Norristown, Pa. He was ordained a diocesan priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia under Archbishop (later Cardinal) John J. Krol on May 22, 1965.

By 1971, Father Nugent was without a parish and serving as a chaplain with the de la Salle Christian Brothers in Elkins Park, Pa. According to Nugent, he was in “a period of transition from parish work to an unofficial leave of absence to explore non-parochial ministerial possibilities.”<sup>14</sup> In other words, six years after ordination, he decided to leave the diocesan priesthood for a more fluid existence as an order priest. In the meantime, he was busy pursuing graduate studies at Temple and Villanova Universities and doing volunteer work with his good friend and loyal companion, Jack Farnell who worked at St. John’s Hospice in Philadelphia operated by the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd. It was at St. John’s that Nugent said he was “inspired” to minister to homosexual men and women.

That same fall, Nugent said he saw an article in the *Philadelphia Bulletin* on Sr. Jeannine’s homosexual ministry and phoned the nun to offer his services. Soon he found himself providing “counseling, confessions and home liturgies” for Dignity/Philadelphia.

Working cheek by jowl with Nugent to bring the Homosexual Collective into the Church were three other priests, Rev. Paul Morrissey an Augustinian, Father Myron Judy of the Order of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and Father John Cimino, a Norbertine priest.<sup>15</sup>

Father Morrissey went on to become a founding-director of Communication Ministry, Inc. (CMI).

Created in 1982, CMI became one of the most important links in the underground homosexual network in the Catholic priesthood and religious

life in the United States. Its primary function is to promote an alternative ideology based on that of the Homosexual Collective for homosexual clergy.

In the early 1970s, Nugent became the first priest in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to testify in favor of a “gay rights” bill at the City Council hearings. Shortly thereafter, Cardinal Krol showed him the door. Nugent took a formal leave of absence from the diocesan priesthood and never returned.

In 1973, Nugent expressed an interest in joining the Society of the Divine Savior and entered the Provincial House of the Salvatorians in Milwaukee. His novitiate began on June 15, 1976. By this time he had relocated to Washington, D.C. to complete his program of religious formation. Once established in the Capitol region, Nugent developed close ties to the national office of Dignity/USA for whom he prepared a “Homosexuality Worksheet for Catholics.” He also negotiated the terms by which Dignity was permitted to hold its worship services on the Georgetown University campus.<sup>16</sup>

Nugent professed his first vows as a Salvatorian on June 16, 1977.

Why did Nugent pick the Salvatorians? According to Rueda, Nugent needed to find “a freer environment that would enable him to work within the homosexual movement.”<sup>17</sup>

As we saw in Chapter 15, the post-Vatican II informal restructuring of the Society of the Divine Savior opened the order up to large-scale homosexual colonization. In the mid-1970s, when Nugent applied for admission into the Salvatorian Order, its Gay Ministry Task Force was still active.

A 1979 communication from Mr. Edward Freeman, the head of the Morning Star Community of Kansas City, Mo., an “experimental” homosexual religious community, to Salvatorian Provincial Myron Wagner at the Vocations Office in Milwaukee, reveals a great deal about the Homosexual Collective that had entrenched itself into the Society of the Divine Savior.<sup>18</sup>

As reported by Rueda, Mr. Freeman wanted to draw Father Wagner’s attention to the Morning Star Community as an alternative for homosexual men and women, chaste and unchaste, who felt drawn to the religious life. Freeman said the constitution for the growing and financially solvent “gay” community was based on the ecumenical Christian rule of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.<sup>19</sup> Freeman invited Wagner to send one of his priests to visit his community. The provincial passed the invitation on to “Bob” Nugent.<sup>20</sup>

There were a number of rank and file Salvatorian priests who continued to oppose the lavenderization of their order, but they were rebuffed by some, though not all, of their religious superiors both in the United States and in Rome.

In a handbill distributed at a 1984 vocations conference, Salvatorian priest, Father James Buckley, who had been waging a four-year war against Nugent and New Ways, alerted his colleagues to the fact that while at least

three Archbishops of the United States have repudiated Nugent's homosexual apostolate, nevertheless the provincials of the Salvatorians continued to defend the priest and his pro-homosexual activities. Fr. Buckley, now a priest of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, summed up the irony of the situation:

Despite the opposition of 43 American Salvatorians, the provincial continues to support Nugent's pro-homosexual activities. Apparently the rest of the province also supports him or considers the matter too trivial to protest. If you want to belong to a religious community that will advance the growing homosexual movement, the Salvatorians are for you.<sup>21</sup>

For the record, at least four consecutive Secretaries General of the Salvatorians in the U.S. have permitted Nugent to continue his homosexual apostolate.

### **The Quixote Center—Parent of New Ways**

Nugent claims that he first contacted Sr. Gramick in 1971 in connection with the Philadelphia article on her new ministry to homosexuals. Gramick says they met at Quixote Center *after* she had moved to Baltimore to teach at Notre Dame College and while she was serving as a chaplain to Dignity.<sup>22</sup>

In any case, we do know that while Dignity was the ideological inspiration for *New Ways*, its physical parent was the Quixote Center.

The Quixote Center, a million dollar plus pro-Marxist, pro-abortion and pro-homosexual organization, began as a small operation in a 3rd floor walk-up in Mt. Rainier, Md. just outside Washington, D.C.

It was incorporated on July 20, 1976, as a 501 (c) (3) tax-deductible "non-profit, benevolent, charitable, educational and philanthropic enterprise" in Prince George's County. Its principal purposes were changed in May 1978 to read: (a) to foster and sponsor Christian educational and religious development and (b) to alleviate poverty and to otherwise remedy maldistribution of wealth and power, domestic and foreign.

The four incorporators and trustees of the Quixote Center as listed on the Articles of Incorporation are: Jesuit William R. Callahan, the founder of Priests for Equality, an organization favoring the ordination of women to the Catholic priesthood; radical feminist Dolores "Dolly" Pomerleau, a journalist with a Masters in Women's Studies from George Washington University; Eileen Olsen of Call to Action/1976; and Father Robert Nugent, SDS.

The address for Nugent on the Articles of Incorporation of the Quixote Center is 6808 Trexler Road, Lanham, Md., the location of the Divine Savior Seminary that has since closed its doors. This means that in 1976, Nugent, who had not yet made his final vows with the Salvatorians, would have needed permission from his Salvatorian superiors to help found the Quixote Center and to become a Co-director.

## THE RITE OF SODOMY

The Quixote Center's archives note that Gramick and Nugent brought with them "their concern for the situation of lesbians and gay men, both in church and society," and that "they designed and launched New Ways workshops which offered interdisciplinary presentations on sexual orientation to help people with their homophobia."<sup>23</sup>

Father Nugent said his organization was inspired by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter of November 11, 1976, "To Live in Christ Jesus—A Pastoral Reflection on the Moral Life." The ill worded, mischievous section on homosexuality reads:

Some persons find themselves through no fault of their own to have a homosexual orientation. Homosexuals, like everyone else, should not suffer from prejudice against their basic human rights. They have a right to respect, friendship and justice. They should have an active role in the Christian community. Homosexual activity, however, as distinguished from homosexual orientation, is morally wrong. Like heterosexual persons, homosexuals are called to give witness to chastity, avoiding, with God's grace, behavior which is wrong for them, just as nonmarital sexual relations are wrong for heterosexuals. Nonetheless, because heterosexuals can usually look forward to marriage, and homosexuals, while their orientation continues, might not, the Christian community should provide them a special degree of pastoral understanding and care.<sup>24</sup>

Readers will note the juxtaposition of homosexual behavior (sodomy) with nonmarital sexual relations. Also, whereas the Church has always condemned willful sinful thoughts and words as well as sinful acts, in the document, homosexuality is considered "morally wrong" only when it is acted out.

In 1978, Gramick and Nugent established New Ways as a separate non-profit corporation headquartered in Mt. Rainier, although the Quixote Center continued to serve as a front for a number of other New Ways projects. By this time, both Gramick and Nugent had had plenty of experience in recruiting and organizing Catholic homosexuals in the clergy and religious life.

That same year, Cardinal William Baum informed Nugent that his priestly faculties for the Archdiocese of Washington had been withdrawn.

In May 4–6, 1979, the Quixote Center, the Episcopal Church and Society Network, *The Witness* magazine, and the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, joined later by New Ways, co-sponsored a "Strategy Conference on Homophobia in the Church." The funding for the pro-homosexual sideshow was provided by the Lesbian Rights Committee and Committee on Women and Religion of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and New Ways.<sup>25</sup>

As reported by Rueda, the three-day affair attracted not only the feminist and leftist liberal elements of these organizations, but also representatives of 16 mainline churches who pledged to devote all their energies and



resources to the development of an ambitious anti-homophobic political/action agenda with an implementation deadline of May 6, 1982.<sup>26</sup>

On February 22, 1980, the Quixote Center ran a four-page ad, "Even the Stones Will Cry Out," in the *National Catholic Reporter*. The ad was critical of the Vatican's disciplinary action against dissident theologians such as Father Hans Küng, Father Edward Schillebeeckx, OP, and self-outed homosexual apologist Father John J. McNeill. The ad bore 2,600 signatures from 100 organizations including many religious orders.

Over the years, New Ways returned the favors of the Quixote Center by supporting its projects and demonstrations and sending their staff and volunteers to the Center's anti-national defense demonstrations in Washington, D.C. as well as pro-ERA political gatherings.<sup>27</sup> Other issues of joint concern include apartheid practices in South Africa, "reproductive rights" (abortion), and women's ordination to the priesthood.<sup>28</sup>

In 1984, Sr. Gramick, signed a death warrant for unborn children when she became a signatory to the first "Catholics for A Free Choice" ad in the *New York Times*. The pro-abortion ad claimed that a diversity of opinions regarding abortion exists among committed Catholics.

Gramick's enthusiasm for baby killing is unbecoming for any woman, especially one who calls herself a Catholic nun, but as Donna Steichen has observed of radical religious feminists, "...among contemporary assailants of the Church, the female of the species is more spiteful, irrational, unscrupulous and destructive than the male."<sup>29</sup>

## **New Ways Receives Federal Grant**

During New Ways' early period of formal incorporation and reorganization as a separate entity from the Quixote Center, Gramick was awarded a three-year federal grant of \$38,000 to study the plight of lesbian women. The research was funded in part by two grants from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to Dignity/San Diego and New Ways.<sup>30</sup>

It was the financial influx of federal monies that permitted Gramick and Nugent to launch New Ways as a separate entity from the Quixote Center.<sup>31</sup>

The stated purpose of Gramick's "Study of the Coming Out Process and Coping Strategies of Lesbian Women," was to "document the coming out process in lesbians (including African American lesbians and older lesbians) and to create a seven-stage model to describe this process."<sup>32</sup>

The 118 volunteers of lesbians and bisexuals from 18 to 76 years of age, represented diverse ethnic, racial, economic, religious, familial, and educational backgrounds. They were recruited from personal contacts, lesbian and women's organizations, lesbian bars and clubs, and lesbian and feminist newspapers and newsletters.

The interview process took place between February and May 1979. It consisted of a 90-minute personal interview with each unpaid volunteer

by one of six employees of New Ways trained by Gramick. The format included pre-coded questions and several open-ended questions related to their “initial lesbian experience,” their “coming-out process,” “job discrimination” and “societal oppression.” Kinsey’s homosexual-heterosexual continuum and other criteria were used to measure the degree of “homosexual orientation” of the interviewees.

According to Gramick, her study showed that the inter-relational dynamics of lesbianism and homosexuality are quite different.<sup>33</sup> She cited a three-year interval between the self-identification of a woman as a lesbian and her entry into lesbian circles.<sup>34</sup>

## The Staff of New Ways

New Ways has always been a small operation, organizationally speaking, with a small staff and relatively modest office and budget. It is an organization driven by ideology rather than monetary concerns. The structure of New Ways has remained basically unchanged since its separation from the Quixote Center as an independent 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt, tax-deductible non-profit, non-membership group. The Department of State of Baltimore forfeited the corporation on October 6, 1983, although New Ways continued to operate and solicit funds under New Ways Ministry, Inc.

Up until 1984, Gramick and Nugent acted as co-directors of New Ways. They were then (technically speaking) replaced by a new Executive Director, Francis (Frank) DeBernardo, a graduate student and former reporter for *The Tablet*, the diocesan weekly for the Diocese of Brooklyn headed at the time by homosexual Bishop Francis John Mugavero.

New Ways has a Board of Directors and an Advisory Board as well as a small staff composed primarily of volunteers and interns and sometimes shared staff from the Quixote Center.

Xaverian Brother Joseph Izzo who worked at New Ways in the early 1980s is typical of the politically savvy activist breed of “religious” long associated with the organization.

Izzo, an avowed homosexual, was a member of the Congregation of the Brothers of St. Francis Xavier, a lay institute and teaching order, and a counselor at Catholic University of America.<sup>35</sup> He served on the Boards of Directors of New Ways, Dignity/Washington and the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights, an arm of New Ways. He was also a member of Pax Christi and sat on the Social Justice Committee of the Xaverian Brothers American Central Province.<sup>36</sup>

In a letter that appeared in the *National Catholic Reporter* on November 13, 1981, Izzo asserted that many American bishops are homosexual.<sup>37</sup> Presumably he shared the names of homosexual bishops with Gramick and Nugent and other New Ways staffers—knowledge that was used to gain access to the corridors of power at the NCCB/USCC and to secure hierarchical support for New Ways.

In 1982, Izzo left the Xaverian Brothers and the Roman Catholic Church.

### **Religious Orders Support New Ways**

In terms of funding, with the exception of Gramick's 1977 government grant from the NIMH to study lesbianism, the principal source of New Ways funding has always been Roman Catholic religious orders. Had New Ways been forced to depend on financial support from outside these religious institutions, the organization would have collapsed long ago.

The transfer of monies from Catholic religious orders to New Ways is accomplished through grants, donations, stipends, gifts of stock and fees accrued from New Ways seminars, workshops, and retreats.<sup>38</sup>

Among the most important financial backers of New Ways has been the founders' own orders, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Salvatorians.<sup>39</sup> The Sisters of Loretto have also made sizable donations through the Loretto Community Special Need Fund.<sup>40</sup>

Although Gramick has denied that Catholic religious orders have been the financial backbone of New Ways, Nugent himself told Father Rueda that the organization receives sizable funding from religious orders.<sup>41</sup> The fact that the School Sisters of Notre Dame and Salvatorians released Nugent and Gramick to head New Ways while continuing their stipends, of course, was in itself a significant "donation."<sup>42</sup>

Also, as Rueda notes, it is not uncommon for churches (and religious orders) to use their tax-exempt status to launder funds to homosexual groups especially large donations from individual donors.<sup>43</sup>

During the 1980s, the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights acted as a conduit for the transfer of funds from religious orders to New Ways. Once a religious institution has endorsed the Coalition they then become an ongoing source of funds for New Ways.<sup>44</sup>

Religious orders such as the School Sisters of Notre Dame are considered to be a church and do not file IRS returns.

In 2001, this writer attempted to get information on the SSND's funding of New Ways and the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights. Sister Joyce Kolbet referred me to Sister Rose Mary Snaza, the order's treasurer, but the latter never honored the author's repeated requests for information.

The support of Catholic religious orders for New Ways' homosexual apostolate also confers many intangible benefits on New Ways including a degree of legitimacy as a "Catholic" organization.

### **New Ways Finances**

An examination of New Ways' IRS tax returns for the accounting period of July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998, provides some interesting insights into New Ways finances and operations as well as its networking activities with other "progressive" pro-homosexual groups in the Church.

The records show that during this time period, New Ways took in \$138,263.41. The net assets of the organization was \$211,957.47.

Paul Thomas is listed as Chairman of the three-member Board of Directors on the return. His address is given as 637 Dover Street, Baltimore, which was Father Nugent's address until 2001. Thomas, actually Father Thomas, is a self-identified homosexual priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and a long-time "gay rights" political activist.<sup>45</sup>

Other Board members include Robert Mialovich, an avowed "gay Catholic" and President of Dignity/USA, and Mary Kilbride, a long-time leader of PFLAG, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays and mother of a homosexual son.

The Executive Director of New Ways is Francis DeBernardo, salary \$12,600. His address is given as New Ways' office.

The stated tax-exempt purpose of New Ways is "to provide spiritual development and education to the public about gay and lesbian issues and Catholicism."

Sources of income totaling \$57,541.97 came from:

- *Bondings* (New Ways newsletter), \$3,633.00
- Sale of New Ways books and tapes, \$6,599.39.
- Georgetown University debate, "Bridging the Gap: A Theological Debate on Homosexuality and Catholicism," that drew 325 people, \$31,990.00.
- "Networking with national organizations concerned about lesbian/gay Catholics and with progressive groups," \$11,856.58.
- "Journey to Strength" a weekend retreat for parents of lesbian/gay children at Graymoor in Garrison, N.Y., \$5,785.13.
- History Project on New Ways—\$10,539.42.
- *Womanjourney Weavings*—A newsletter for lesbian nuns, \$5,731.20.
- Resources/Publications Project, \$2,443.24.
- Lecture/Education Project, \$2,613.28. The New Ways programs took place in St. Paul, Minn.; Claremont, Calif.; South Bend, Ind.; Boston; Nazareth, Ky.; Marriottsville, Md.; Gaylord, Mich.; Oldenburg, Ind.; Hartford, Conn.; and Shepherdstown, W.Va.
- Building Bridges Project—"Fifteen regional projects about building bridges between gay and lesbian people and the church." Sessions were held in Tropy, N.Y.; Worcester, Mass.; Providence, R.I.; San Diego; Orange, Calif.; Las Vegas; Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Cincinnati, Ohio; Wheeling, W.Va.; Lexington, Ky.; Nashville, Memphis, Tenn.; Evansville, Ind. Total number of persons served—265. \$37,129.19.
- Spirituality/Sexuality—a six week discussion series on *Wrestling With The Angel—Faith and Religion in the Lives of Gay Men* for 12

people. \$1,684.93. (Edited by Brian Bouldrey, this book contains twenty-one essays by active homosexual men from different religious backgrounds including at least six unrepentant and bitter former Catholics. Frank Browning's essay "The Way of Some Flesh," contains a blasphemous analogy that is too obscene to be quoted.)

- Pilgrimage—"A pilgrimage to Greece and Turkey to walk in the footsteps of St. Paul for lesbian/gay Catholics and their parents and friends for 43 people from January 19–26, 1998," conducted by Father Nugent and Sister Gramick.

Contributions, gifts, and grants to New Ways totaled \$70,552.96, but the names of individual and corporate donors are not listed on the IRS 990 form.

Groups receiving donations from New Ways included the Quixote Center, People for the American Way (pro-abortion), Mary's Pence (the feminist version of Peter's Pence), and Communication Ministry, Inc. publisher of *Communication*, a newsletter for homosexual clergy and lesbian nuns.<sup>46</sup>

The lion's share of New Ways' expenditures totaling \$124,361.41 went to pay for the above "program accomplishments" not one of which has the slightest connection to authentic Catholicism, and for salaries, management, and fundraising costs.

### ***Bondings*—A Newsletter That's Hard to Beat**

The ideology of New Ways is best expressed through its newsletter *Bondings*, a title with decidedly sadomasochist implications.

*Bondings*, published in newspaper format, contains articles on homosexuality and related fields with advertisements for New Ways publications and programs including lesbian retreats and alternative forms of spirituality. Among the American bishops quoted *ad nauseam* in *Bondings* are Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Bishop Walter Sullivan, Bishop Matthew Clark, Bishop Joseph K. Symons, Bishop Kenneth Untener, and Archbishop Rembert Weakland.

The newsletter provides advice for the lovelorn on guidelines for same-sex "marriage" and gives directions to "gay friendly" churches. *Bondings* also covers the "gay" international scene with an especially critical eye of all things Roman. The importance of gay and lesbian symbolism was illustrated in a story on the rainbow sash fashioned by French couturier Jean-Charles de Castelbajac for Pope John Paul II when the Holy Father visited Paris in August 1997.

New Ways "homophobia" and "building bridges" workshops are systematically covered as are the latest political issues on the Homosexual Collective's agenda.

Soap opera confessions like, “My Daughter is a Lesbian” and biographies of clerical homosexuals who have died of AIDS help fill out the news. Many of the articles featured in *Bondings* are reprints from the *National Catholic Reporter*.

The most important thing to remember about *Bondings*, is that it never, ever strays from the official party line of the secular Homosexual Collective.

### Political Lobbying, Symposiums, and Retreats

The loyalty of New Ways and its founders toward the Homosexual Collective are most evident in New Ways’ political agenda and tactics. Father Rueda drives this point home in *The Homosexual Network*.

One particular incident that stuck in this writer’s mind occurred in January 1981 when the Archdiocese of New York was preparing to oppose New York City’s “Gay Rights” bill. The Homosexual Collective wanted to find out what legislative strategies the Archdiocese would use to oppose the measure.

In December 1980, a representative of New York City’s National Gay Task Force contacted Brother Rick Garcia, a member of the non-canonical order of the Brothers for Christian Community who worked for New Ways.<sup>47</sup> Garcia was told to contact the archdiocese and get that important information for the National Gay Task Force as well as for New Ways.<sup>48</sup>

On January 9, 1981, the dutiful Garcia sent a follow-up letter to an earlier phone conversation with Father Damien, the Archdiocesan Director for Communications, in which he (Garcia) asked for “a copy of the official position of the archdiocese...on the anti-discrimination legislation (Intro 384) relative to homosexually oriented women and men.”<sup>49</sup> Garcia described New Ways as a “national Catholic center involved in education and ministry to sexual minorities, their families, friends and the larger Catholic community.”<sup>50</sup>

That very same day, Garcia sent a letter to Jesse Lowen of the National Gay Task Force and told him he was in the process of securing a copy of the position paper of the archdiocese in opposition to the pro-homosexual legislation. Garcia wrote, “With that in hand, we will be better prepared to respond to its ‘problem.’”<sup>51</sup> Garcia went on to say:

I feel that New Ways Ministry can be of use in combating the Archdiocese as we are a Roman Catholic organization involved full time in gay rights and gay ministry. We have prominent supporters within the Catholic Church all over the country and many in New York City. ...If we can be of service to you in any way—please do not hesitate to contact me...fraternally yours, in the struggle for justice.<sup>52</sup>

In addition to maintaining close relations with secular homosexual organizations like the National Gay Task Force, New Ways keeps close ties

with other ostensibly religious-based national homosexual organizations including the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Churches (UFMCC).

Even before New Ways had formally organized, R. Adam DeBaugh, the Christian Social Action Director and a full-time lobbyist for the UFMCC in Washington, D.C., had pledged his support for the new group.<sup>53</sup>

In a “Dear Bob” letter dated April 4, 1978 to Father Nugent, DeBaugh, an avowed homosexual and long-time activist for “gay rights” said he was sorry to have missed Bob at the Southeastern Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men in Atlanta that past weekend, but hoped they could get together to discuss the new center (New Ways) and Washington politics. In the meantime, DeBaugh was sending Bob and Jeannine the latest issue of *Gays on the Hill* and a new “Write to Congress” pamphlet.<sup>54</sup>

In 1980, Nugent assisted the UFMCC in putting together “Denominational Statements on Gay Rights” which was used to lobby the U.S. Congress and Senate and to assist in the formation of pro-homosexual political caucuses in churches and seminaries.<sup>55</sup>

### **New Ways—The Struggle for Power**

Organizational relationships between New Ways and groups like Dignity and the National Gay Task Force are generally cordial although internal struggles for power and control of the Homosexual Movement within the Catholic Church are always simmering just below the surface.

In 1980, New Ways executives locked horns with Dignity’s Executive Board over some financial aspects of their jointly published booklet, *Homosexual Catholics: A New Primer for Discussion* by Jeannine Gramick and Thomas Oddo.

According to the minutes of Dignity’s Executive Board meeting in Vancouver, B.C. on October 12, 1980, which were obtained by Father Rueda, Dignity, Inc. had put up the money for the printing of the *Primer* and the profits were to go to the authors. Dignity accused New Ways of not living up to its agreement. It charged that New Ways sent out their own orders before Dignity had a chance to publicize the *Primer* and recoup their expenses. Behind this minor financial spat, however, loomed a more serious problem.<sup>56</sup>

Joe Totten, Dignity’s treasurer, accused Father Nugent of sabotaging Dignity’s efforts to set up a booth at the Conference on Evangelization by telling the Director of the conference that Dignity was not a Catholic organization and was not in line with Catholic teaching. Actually both charges were correct, but they applied equally to New Ways. Dignity said that New Ways “had closed the door on Dignity getting in, and as a result none of the groups got in.”<sup>57</sup> The Dignity officers said that in the future, any agreement with New Ways must take the form of a written contract.<sup>58</sup>

In addition to maintaining contacts with pro-homosexual activist groups like Dignity, New Ways interacts regularly with other liberal quasi-religious

organizations such as the National Ecumenical Coalition, Inc. (NEC) in Washington, D.C. The NEC has pledged its support to New Ways and its goal of eliminating “ALL discrimination against homosexual men and women.”<sup>59</sup>

“We believe that any steps you can take toward achieving the objectives on the civil and constitutional rights of all gay men and women, will be most beneficial in achieving what we perceive to be a shared goal—dignity, love, and justice for all,” NEC officers Rev. Williams Hibbs and Nancy C. Ware assured Gramick and Nugent.<sup>60</sup>

During the early 1980s, Nugent and Gramick worked with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the U.S. Catholic Conference on various projects.

Fr. Nugent was appointed a consultant at the NCCB/USCC for “sexual minorities.” When the USCC Department of Education published *Planning for Single Young Adult Ministry: Directives for Ministerial Outreach*, Nugent wrote the section on “Single Young Adult Sexual Minorities.”<sup>61</sup>

New Ways has been permitted to distribute its pro-homosexual propaganda at official NCCB/USCC conferences including the East Coast Conference on Religious Education held in Washington, D.C. in March 1982.<sup>62</sup>

## **New Ways Seminars, Workshops and Retreats**

From the late 1970s onward, New Ways organized many lesbian/nun and “gay”/priest workshops and retreats. These events are usually held at undisclosed locations in Catholic dioceses around the country. New Ways facilitators urge homosexual clergy and religious to “share their experiences and their pain.” New Ways provides the attendees with a wide variety of information from how to “come out” to one’s superior or bishop, to instruction on how to organize “gay” and lesbian political caucuses within their order or diocese.

One of these gatherings called “Telling The Story: Hers, His, Ours” for lesbians and “gays” was held at the Dominican Weber Center in Adrian, Mich. from November 6–8, 1981. The following April, Gramick and Nugent held a lesbian retreat titled “Woman, Gay, and Catholic” at the same site.

In November 20–22, 1981, New Ways sponsored the “First National Symposium on Homosexuality and the Catholic Church” in Washington, D.C. dedicated to combating the “sin of homophobia” in the Church. The response from Catholic religious was so overwhelming that New Ways organizers had to move the event from the Holy Trinity Seminary in Silver Spring to a commercial facility.<sup>63</sup>

New Ways reported that 78% of the 180 attendees were nuns, religious, or diocesan priests or brothers including 18 major superiors of orders, 20 vocation or formation directors in religious orders, and 21 representatives



of diocesan organizations and Dignity groups.<sup>64</sup> Among the orders represented at the symposium were the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Salvatorians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Sisters of St. Joseph, Ursulines, Maryknolls, Paulists, Capuchins, Augustinians, Carmelites, and Christian Brothers.<sup>65</sup>

### The Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights

While New Ways' retreats and workshops helped to provide an ideological base to justify and sustain clerical homosexuals in the diocesan clergy and religious life, the real task of New Ways is to *organize* these individuals into a coherent *political* force capable of moving the agenda of the Homosexual Collective forward in the Church and in Society. The location of New Ways' office just outside of the capital has given its staffers ready access to its primary staging areas and sources for recruitment—Catholic seminaries and houses of religious that are concentrated in the Washington, D.C. area and Catholic University of America and Georgetown University.

Toward this end, Nugent and Gramick created one of the most important powerful pro-homosexual political organizations of the period—the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights (CCGCR).

To disguise the fact that the CCGCR was, in fact, a creature of New Ways, a New York post office box address was used on the Coalition's petitions and mailings.<sup>66</sup>

According to Nugent, the CCGRC was created to implement the resolutions of the 1976 United States Bishops' "Call to Action" Conference in Detroit on homosexuality. The CTA called for programs and services to meet the needs of homosexual men and women; rooting out structures and attitudes which foster discrimination against homosexuals; providing pastoral care to "sexual minorities" who are subjected to "societal discrimination and alienation" and providing counseling and support to families whose members are part of "a sexual minority."<sup>67</sup>

In 1980, *Bondings* reported that 1,373 individuals and 91 groups had endorsed the pro-homosexual objectives of the CCGCR. By November 1981, the number of endorsements had grown to 2,469 individuals and 150 organizations including 606 Catholic priests and brothers, 747 Catholic nuns, and over 50 Catholic religious orders.

The CCGCR urged all Catholics to support pro-gay legislation under the banner of "civil rights" and to refrain from any opposition to pro-homosexual ordinances "on the basis of unfounded fears, irrational myths and inflammatory statements about homosexual persons," and to support the CCGCR's leadership and witness in "this ministry of justice, healing and reconciliation."<sup>68</sup>

Among the male religious orders backing the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights were the Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, Holy Cross Fathers, Salvatorians, Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, Oblates of Mary

Immaculate, Benedictines, Augustinians, Christian Brothers and Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

Among women religious, the School Sisters of Notre Dame lead the parade followed by the Sisters of Loretto, Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Dominican Sisters, Sisters of Mercy, Franciscan Sisters, Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Other supporters of the CCGCR homosexual lobby included Sisters in Gay Ministry Associated (SIGMA), the Quixote Center, Association of Chicago Priests, Capuchin Gay Caucus, Georgetown University (Office of Campus Ministry), National Assembly of Religious Brothers, Women's Ordination Conference (WOC) and the Thomas Merton Center (Pittsburgh, Pa.).

One of the Coalition's most influential members was Reverend Anthony Kosnick, a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit, Professor of Moral Theology, and Dean of Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Mich. Father Kosnick held a Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Angelicum in Rome and a degree in canon law from the Gregorian University and was reported to be close friends with Pope John Paul II.

In 1972, Kosnick was appointed Chairman of the Catholic Theological Society of America's Committee on the Study of Human Sexuality. The Committee's final report was issued in 1977 under the title, *Human Sexuality—New Directions in American Catholic Thought*.<sup>69</sup> The report is an unabashed apologia for sodomy and all forms of deviant behavior and an open attack on Catholic morality. Two of the five members of the Committee were members of the CCGCR.

The language, lexicon and arguments used by the CCGCR to promote the vice of homosexuality as a virtue was identical to that of the secular Homosexual Collective. The CCGCR claimed that homosexuals are an "oppressed people" who need to be "liberated," that homosexuality is an "inborn condition" and not a matter of choice, that homosexuals do not recruit youth, that the homosexual movement is "family-friendly" and pederasty has no connection whatsoever to homosexuality.

In a 1987 *Wall Street Journal* article on homosexuality and the Catholic Church by Dianna Solis, Father Nugent was identified as the leader of the 3,500 member CCGCR. Solis quoted Nugent as saying, "There is just terrible pain out there."<sup>70</sup> He said that homosexuality was a divisive issue in the Church and Society and he just didn't see "things settling down."<sup>71</sup>

One of the last projects carried out by the CCGCR in the late 1980s, was a series of seminars conducted by Nugent and Gramick on "Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Holiness." One could, however, have eliminated the reference to holiness.

According to Rev. William Witt, who attended the CCGCR seminar given at the Newman Center of Youngstown State University, the word

holiness was mentioned but once in the daylong seminar. Nor was there any mention of prayer or God's will, said Witt.<sup>72</sup>

And why should there be?

New Ways is a *political* action organization not a *religious* one. To view it through anything other than a political prism is an exercise in self-deception.

By the early 1990s, the CCGCR seemed to disappear from the scene as quickly as it had appeared.

It was replaced by other New Ways fronts including Sisters in Gay Ministry Associated, the Center for Homophobia Education, and Catholic Parents Network.

Nugent and Gramick created the Center for Homophobia Education (CHE) in 1991, after they had been ordered by the Vatican in 1983 to separate themselves from New Ways. The CHE is listed on some brochures as a project of Windmills, Inc. a subsidiary of the Quixote Center. On other CHE materials, the New York City address of the CCGCR is given. The U.S. tour of the CHE was funded in part from a grant from the James R. Dougherty, Jr. Foundation, Beeville, Texas.

The Catholic Parents Network was created by Nugent and Gramick in 1995. Its wheels are greased by the same pro-homosexual propaganda that drives New Ways. The organization has multiple office addresses including one in Hyattsville, Md. and Nugent's Dover Street address in Baltimore.

### **Trouble in Paradise—Vatican Investigation Begins**

From the moment Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent began their public "ministry" to homosexuals, the Vatican has been flooded with complaints from orthodox Catholics demanding that New Ways be disbanded.

The protests against New Ways were so insistent that beginning in 1977, the Vatican's Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Secular Institutes (CICL) was forced to order the superiors of the Salvatorians and the School Sisters of Notre Dame to conduct no less than three "internal studies" of New Ways.<sup>73</sup> Since the superiors themselves were actively involved in funding and promoting New Ways, their reports to the CICL in Rome were uniformly supportive of the organization.

In the meantime, a few American bishops had taken matters into their own hands.

In 1978, Cardinal James Hickey stripped Nugent of his faculties to preach and hear confessions in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. However, Hickey did not make his action against Nugent public. It was not until mid-November 1981, when Gramick and Nugent scheduled their "First National Symposium on Homosexuality and the Catholic Church" in his archdiocese, that Hickey's earlier sanctions against Nugent came to light. At this time Hickey asked Nugent's and Gramick's religious superiors

to remove the offending priest and nun from his jurisdiction, but the request was ignored. New Ways continued to operate in the archdiocese.

In the spring of 1981, Nugent and Gramick were informed by Cardinal Cody of the Archdiocese of Chicago that New Ways could not hold a workshop scheduled for June 9 at St. Clement's Catholic Church. Cardinal Cody banned them from holding any workshops or seminars in his archdiocese. The affair was rescheduled for Grace Episcopal Church, but was later cancelled after the rector had second thoughts about incurring Cody's displeasure. The New Ways workshop was eventually held at the Trinity Episcopal Church.

On May 5, New Ways was joined by representatives from Dignity, Chicago Call to Action, NOW, Lesbian Community Center, Integrity, and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays at a press conference to protest Cardinal Cody's actions.

Under Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the Archdiocese of Chicago again opened its doors to New Ways.<sup>74</sup>

In the late 1980s, Archbishop Theodore McCarrick of Newark, N.J., and Bernard Cardinal Law of Boston took action against New Ways. Most Catholic dioceses, however, remained open to New Ways. By 1986, the organization reported that it had been in 50 dioceses in the United States.<sup>75</sup> By 1992, New Ways had infected 130 of the 169 dioceses in the United States.<sup>76</sup>

### **Congregation for Religious Takes Action**

In 1983, the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Secular Institutes, renamed the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, instructed Sister Gramick and Father Nugent to separate themselves totally and completely from New Ways and forbade them from engaging in any homosexual apostolate unless they made it manifestly clear that homosexual acts are intrinsically and objectively wrong.

Callers to the New Ways office were told that Sister Gramick was on a one-year leave of absence and Father Nugent was no longer connected with New Ways, but these statements were not true.

As late as 1984, both Gramick and Nugent were still active with the New Ways front organization, the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights, and Nugent still maintained his Dover Street residence in Baltimore with avowed homosexual Father Paul Thomas, Chairman of the Board of Directors of New Ways. According to veteran Washington, D.C. reporter Gary Potter, by the early 1980s, Thomas's housemate, Father Nugent, had also "publicly acknowledged his own homosexuality."<sup>77</sup>

In the fall of 1984, Sr. Gramick was given sanctuary by homosexual Bishop Francis Mugavero of Brooklyn, the only Catholic bishop on the East Coast willing to take her in. She continued her lesbian/gay "ministry" under

the aegis of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.<sup>78</sup> The Sisters of Mercy's Office of Social Action also lent its support to Gramick's "ministry."

In 1989, Gramick moved back to the Archdiocese of Baltimore where her homosexual "ministry" was supported by the Baltimore Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, in defiance of the ruling of the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes.

Nugent had also wanted to settle into the Brooklyn Diocese, but Mugavero refused to incardinate him.

In 1984, the Salvatorian priest relocated himself in the "gay friendly" Archdiocese of Newark, N.J. under Archbishop Peter Gerety. After Gerety retired, Archbishop Theodore McCarrick refused to renew Nugent's faculties and in late 1987, he was forced to return to Baltimore to continue his work on behalf of the Homosexual Collective.<sup>79</sup>

### **Nugent In Ireland**

The late 1980s saw Gramick and Nugent continuing their pro-homosexual apostolate, primarily through their writing and low profile speaking engagements, lectures, and workshops.

During Advent of 1987, Nugent visited Ireland where he gave a series of lectures on homosexuality and the Catholic Church. He was interviewed by *Intercom*, a magazine published by the Catholic Communications Institute for Catholic clergy and church workers in Ireland.<sup>80</sup>

In the *Intercom* interview, Nugent identified himself as "a Salvatorian priest from New Jersey and a lecturer and expert on homosexual ministry."<sup>81</sup> Nugent said that homosexuals were a "hidden minority in our Church," and therefore, it was necessary to do some "conscience raising" in the Church as to their needs.<sup>82</sup> He cited ways in which Catholic school children in religious instruction and sex education classes could be sensitized to the needs of homosexuals whose "difference" makes them outsiders.<sup>83</sup> The Salvatorian priest went on to discuss "the gifts that homosexual Catholics have to offer the community, among them the experience of being rejected and neglected and condemned."<sup>84</sup> He also gave his doctrinal views on the "primacy of conscience," and "the principle of gradualism in moral ideals."<sup>85</sup> He said he would like to see parish-based support groups for homosexuals and quoted U.S. Archbishop Rembert Weakland on the advisability of seeking out friendship with homosexual people.<sup>86</sup> Unfortunately, Archbishop Weakland of Milwaukee, home of the Salvatorian's Vocations Office, took his own advice too literally and would live to regret it.

### **Vatican Creates the Maida Commission**

Finally, amidst more complaints from the United States and Europe about the continued involvement of Gramick and Nugent in pro-homo-

sexual intrigues, the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes announced the formation of an independent U.S.-based committee to study the matter. The publication of Gramick's controversial article "Social Discrimination of Lesbians and the Church," in the international theological journal *Concilium* may have been a precipitating factor in getting the Vatican to act.

On March 4, 1988, Archbishop Vincent Fagiolo, on behalf of the Congregation's Prefect, Jérôme Cardinal Hamer, notified Sister Patricia Flynn, General Superior of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and Father Malachy McBride, General Superior of the Society of the Divine Savior in Rome, that a commission would be established in the United States "to render a judgment as to the clarity and orthodoxy of the public presentations" of Sister Jeannine Gramick, SSND, and Father Robert Nugent, SDS, "with respect to the Church's teaching on homosexuality."

On May 6, 1988, Archbishop Pio Laghi, the Pro-Nuncio to Apostolic Nunciature in Washington, D.C., announced the appointment of Bishop Adam Joseph Maida, then Bishop of Green Bay, Wis. to head the three-member commission.<sup>87</sup> Bishop Maida was joined by Msgr. James Mulligan, a moral theologian and Director of Priestly Life and Ministry Programs for the Diocese of Allentown, Pa. and Sister Sharon Holland, IHM, an expert on the law and religious life from the Catholic University of America. In September 1989, Sister Holland was replaced by Dr. Janet Smith, Professor of Philosophy of the University of Texas, Irving.<sup>88</sup>

Unfortunately, despite his expertise in both civil and canon law, Bishop Maida was a poor choice from the start to head any inquiry into New Ways' founders. Subsequent events bore this out.

Bishop Maida was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop (later Cardinal) Dearden in 1956, and served as Dearden's Vice Chancellor and General Council in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. On May 1, 1968, Dearden ordained Father Thomas J. Gumbleton, an Auxiliary of Detroit. Bishop Gumbleton became one of New Ways' most loyal and devoted servants. Yet, after Maida became Archbishop of Detroit on June 12, 1990, he did nothing to reign in his notorious pro-homosexual auxiliary. How could he justify an investigation of New Ways' founders Gramick and Nugent without calling into question Bishop Gumbleton's role in aiding and abetting New Ways? It was a question that went begging.

On July 23, 1988, after the preliminary preparations and juridical process for the independent investigation by the Maida Commission were agreed upon, Archbishop Fagiolo advised Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent on the ground rules for the investigation. He explained that when the members of the commission had finished their investigation they would present their finding to Gramick and Nugent, their Institutes, and the appropriate Curial Congregations in Rome.<sup>89</sup>

Fagiolo said that everyone was in agreement that the investigation should be conducted without any publicity so that the process would be carried out “in a fair, just, and peaceful atmosphere” and that, “a public statement would be made at the completion of the commission’s task with the knowledge and consultation of all parties.”<sup>90</sup>

On August 14, a two-page letter was sent by Archbishop Laghi to Archbishop Maida in which the Commission’s mandate was explicitly spelled out.

Then there was silence.

According to Nugent and Gramick, there was no written communication between the Congregation and the two religious communities from May 27, 1989 until January 24, 1994. Because of the lapse of time and the absence of communication, Gramick and Nugent, as well as their religious superiors in the United States, believed that the Maida Commission had been dissolved.<sup>91</sup>

For the New Ways founders it was back to business as usual.

### **Center for Homophobia Education**

Unable to operate openly under the umbrella of New Ways after 1984, Gramick and Nugent created another ad hoc group, the Center for Homophobia Education (CHE) that used the New York post office box address of the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights.

On August 9, 1989, Gramick and Nugent served as facilitators of a “Homophobia in Religion and Society” seminar in the Diocese of Sacramento with the express approval of Bishop Francis A. Quinn.

Veteran pro-lifer Laurett Elsberry was in attendance to record the pro-homosexual road show.<sup>92</sup>

Identical CHE workshops were held in dioceses throughout California in early September 1989 with favorable reporting from diocesan papers including *The Catholic Herald* that covered the Carmichael “Homophobia” seminar held on September 7, 1989. The *Herald* reporter went along with the ruse and identified the priest and nun as currently being associated with the non-existent office of the Center for Homophobia Education in New York City.

Earning their frequent flier miles, in mid-September, the duo organized a conference titled “Our Lesbian and Gay Religious and Clergy” in Garrison, N.Y. In attendance were Vicars for Religious from the Archdiocese of New York representing John Cardinal O’Connor, the Diocese of Brooklyn representing Bishop Francis J. Mugavero and the Diocese of Rockville Center representing Bishop John R. McGann. News of the gig that featured Sister Gramick ran in the *New York Times* and Catholic independent weeklies such as *The Wanderer*.

It was only a matter of time before the news that Nugent and Gramick were foot-loose and fancy-free reached the ears of Cardinal Hickey in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.<sup>93</sup>

## Hickey Goes on the War Path

On October 10, 1989, Cardinal Hickey fired off two letters, one to the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, now known as the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and one to Bishop Maida at the Chancery office in Green Bay. Hickey reminded Curial officials and Maida that in 1988, Archbishop Pio Laghi had reaffirmed the 1983 ruling from the Congregation that prohibited Gramick and Nugent from engaging in any homosexual apostolate, whatsoever, unless it is clearly stated “that homosexual acts are intrinsically and objectively wrong.”<sup>94</sup> The responses Cardinal Hickey received from Rome and Maida are not a matter of public record.

What is a matter of public record is that “a cone of silence” fell over the Maida Commission for five long years. During this time Nugent and Gramick created more organizational fronts behind which they continued their work on behalf of the Homosexual Collective. They also continued their pro-homosexual writings.

## The Ideological Writings of New Ways

As the Maida Commission was charged with investigating “the clarity and orthodoxy of the public presentations” of Father Nugent and Sister Gramick “with respect to the Church’s teaching on homosexuality,” it was expected that the Commission would include a complete review of all of New Ways’ major publications. For it is through their words, written and spoken, as well as through their activities with New Ways and the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights and the like, that Nugent and Gramick reveal their anti-Catholic ideological biases.

Since 1983, Gramick and Nugent have edited a number of books on homosexuality and the Catholic Church and have contributed various essays on the subject, many of which are at the “cutting-edge” of the new “gay/lesbian theology.” A review of all these important in-house works is presented in order of the date of publication beginning with *A Challenge to Love* in 1980 and ending with *Voices of Hope* that was published in 1995 after the Maida Commission had made its findings public.



### *A Challenge to Love*

*A Challenge to Love—Gay and Lesbian Catholics in the Church*, edited by Robert Nugent, is the first major work on homosexuality published by New Ways in 1980.<sup>95</sup>



It opens with an invitation “to dialogue” by Bishop Walter Sullivan of Richmond, Va. and is followed by 18 commentaries on homosexuality, ostensibly from different perspectives, i.e., societal, biblical, pastoral and vocational views of homosexuality.

However, with the exception of Rev. Edward A. Malloy’s essay “Point/Counterpoint,” the presentations are unabashedly pro-homosexual. Many of the priest-religious contributors are well-known in homosexualist circles including Dominican Matthew Fox, Father Gregory Baum, Margaret A. Farley, RSM, Franciscan Michael D. Guinan, Jesuit John McNeill, Dominican Bruce A. Williams, Christian Brother James R. Zullo, Marguerite Kropinak of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Pittsburgh and Nugent’s housemate, Father Paul K. Thomas of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

The lead article by Jeannine Gramick is titled, “Prejudice, Religion, and Homosexual People.”

Gramick asserts that “A societal unwillingness to sanction any sexual behaviors, which depart from an established norm, may be a symptom of homophobia.”<sup>96</sup> However, the “characteristics and root causes of homosexual prejudice” remain basically the same “religious and familial and sexual dogmatism,” she states.<sup>97</sup> The nun concludes that homosexual prejudice can be replaced “with toleration” and finally with acceptance, through education and “conscious-raising” efforts directed at the shattering of gay and lesbian “myths and stereotypes,” the removal of discriminatory legal barriers and the end to any “taboo behavior” society assigns as “unnatural.”<sup>98</sup>

In “The Christian Body and Homosexual Maturing,” Christian Brother Zullo and Dr. James D. Whitehead weigh in with the novel idea of the bisexuality of “the body of Christ” i.e., “the people of God” are part homosexual and part heterosexual.<sup>99</sup> According to the authors, “As the larger Christian community is instructed in the differing patterns of gay religious maturing, it will be exorcised of some of its homophobia, and...come closer, if belatedly and reluctantly, to its own ideal of Christ’s radical mutuality.”<sup>100</sup> “Gay and lesbian Christians are more like heterosexual Christians than they are different,” Zullo and Whitehead conclude.<sup>101</sup>

Theologian-sociologist Gregory Baum’s essay “The Homosexual Condition and Political Responsibility” centers upon the “oppression” and “liberation” of homosexual peoples and their “divine call to become prophets, critics of society, agents of social change, reformers, or radicals.”<sup>102</sup>

However, the key point Baum wants to drive home is that, “Christian gays want to be loyal to one another, whether they choose to follow the radical or the reformist way.”<sup>103</sup>

In “Homosexuality, Lesbianism and the Future: The Creative Role of the Gay Community in Building a More Humane Society,” the Jesuit priest and “partnered” John McNeill picks up on Baum’s theme of the unique and

even “superior” psychological qualities of gays including their heightened sense of empathy and “pedagogical eros.”<sup>104</sup> McNeill states that one of the “essential services” gays render for heterosexuals is the freeing of the latter from the shackles of “traditional procreative sexual ethics,” by “guiding their heterosexual brothers and sisters to a new, happier, more fulfilled and human sexual life...”<sup>105</sup>

Similarly, Gabriel Moran in “Education: Sexual and Religious,” argues that, “The human race will never understand power, love, and transcendence as long as it fails to embrace gay sexuality.”<sup>106</sup>

In “Homosexuals: A Christian Pastoral Response Now,” Franciscan priest, Michael Guinan, denies the idea that gays “recruit from the young” or “that they molest the young.”<sup>107</sup>

Daniel Maguire in “The Morality of Homosexual Marriage” defends homosexuals against the “calumnious charge of preferred promiscuity.”<sup>108</sup>

In “Gay Catholics and Eucharistic Communion: Theological Parameters,” Dominican Bruce Williams, who will later defend Nugent and Gramick before the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome, subtly, but effectively, undermines the Church’s prohibition against actively gay Catholics receiving the Eucharist.

Williams argues that if contracepting couples acting in “good-faith” can receive Holy Communion, why not active homosexuals who are living in a “faithful relationship” and who act in “good conscience ...despite the objective inadequacy of their conformity to the Church.”<sup>109</sup> He bolsters his argument by quoting fellow Dominican, Benedict Ashley, who told American and Canadian bishops in Dallas in February 1981 at a “sexuality workshop” that while the Church “ought to continue to preach from the housetops her perennial moral principles” on the subject of human sexuality, nevertheless, the Magisterium “must not reject or neglect those persons whose subjective conscience does not permit them as yet to see the practical truth of the Church’s teachings on these difficult (sexual not homosexuality specific) matters.”<sup>110</sup> Williams concludes that “gay Catholics involved in a lifestyle they honestly do not recognize as sinful should not be discouraged from this unique means of grace any more severely than other seriously errant believers who are presumably in good faith.”<sup>111</sup>

Father Matthew Fox chimes in with the good news of “creation-centered spirituality” and “the homosexual as *anawim* (poor or afflicted)” in “The Spiritual Journey of the Homosexual ...and Just About Everyone Else.” One of Fox’s parting statements is that, as we move from a “sexual era” to a “mystical era” we need those (i.e., homosexuals) “who can teach us the lighter, more playful, less serious, and less goal-oriented side to sexuality—the mystical side.”<sup>112</sup> “Here, as Masters and Johnson have found, the homosexual offers a gift to the heterosexual community and society as a whole,” concludes Fox.<sup>113</sup>

Father Paul Thomas' essay "Gay and Lesbian Ministry During Marital Breakdown and the Annulment Process" is spliced with subtle pro-homosexual tidbits. For example, there is his biblical reference to Jonathan who, Thomas says, had a homosexual "orientation," and his assertion that "Nearly all contemporary experts...believe that a genuine homosexual or heterosexual orientation is basically irreversible."<sup>114</sup> Thomas, a homosexual, calls any attempt to alter a person's "basic personality" including his or her affectional preference, a "moral outrage."<sup>115</sup>

As a footnote to his comments on the licitness and validity of marital impediments, Thomas tosses out a feeler in favor of "stable homosexual unions":

Ecclesiastical authorities would undoubtedly propose norms and guidelines for the benefit of lesbian and gay male relationships if the Catholic Church ever differentiated its well-known official teaching about same-sex genital behavior (e.g. by qualifying *homosexual* relations as immoral only for *heterosexual* persons, not for *homosexual* couples). Even now some moral theologians, such as Philip Keane, have tentatively suggested that "the Church and society should be open to finding other ways of supporting stable homosexual unions."<sup>116</sup>

This statement reflects Thomas' opinion that while non-homosexuals "pervert" their own basic nature through homosexual behavior, so gay and lesbian people "act contrary to their own true orientation by entering heterosexual relationships."<sup>117</sup> Thomas also supports Kinsey's claim that homosexuality is as natural as heterosexuality. He also approves of the 1973 statement of the American Psychiatric Association that "homosexuality per se implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capabilities."<sup>118</sup>

Father Paul Thomas is identified in *A Challenge to Love* as a priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, a Procurator-Advocate for Annulment Cases and Judge-Delegate on the Archdiocesan Tribunal, a member of the Archdiocesan outreach ministry for gay and lesbian Catholics, and a Board of Director of Communication Ministry, Inc. The fact that Thomas is Chairman of the Board of Directors of New Ways is not disclosed.

The essay "Point/Counterpoint" by Rev. Edward A. Malloy, CSC, a professor at Notre Dame and author of *Homosexuality and the Christian Way of Life*, is offered as a counter-weight to the overtly pro-homosexual bias of *A Challenge to Love*. Malloy contends that his research has convinced him that, "the homosexual way of life, as evolved in the social structures and practices of the homosexual sub-culture, is irreconcilable with the Christian way of life."<sup>119</sup>

On a first reading, especially when compared to the unbridled enthusiasm for homosexuality that marks the other essays, Malloy's approach seems almost Catholic, but it is not. And therein lies the hidden danger for the most dangerous of lies are those that come closest to the truth.

For example, while Malloy disapproves of the impersonal, selfish, and capricious nature of many homosexual interactions, he, like Father Charles Curran, approves of “the homosexual couple who have forged a life together across a considerable period of time in the absence of normal societal approbation and who strive to be faithful to the commitment they share are worthy of respect and understanding.”<sup>120</sup>

This is *not* a Catholic position.

As Father William Hinds, a defender of the Faith explains:

On what possible grounds can a sin gain moral standing because it is habitual? The opposite is true; the more inveterate and long-term, the more insidious the evil. The sin is not now one of passion and maladaptive sexual patterns, but rather a series of conscious choices and reinforcements made repeatedly in the cold light of day...(the) implication being that there might be theological reasonableness to acceptance of long-term homosexual relationships; such an answer is far from the truth of our faith.<sup>121</sup>

The final verdict on Malloy’s essay? “Nice try, but no cigar.”

*A Challenge to Love* ends with Robert Nugent’s essay, “Priest, Celibate and Gay: You Are Not Alone,” in which the author cites the work of Christian Brother Luke Salm on “four basic approaches to chastity”:

- First, the traditional approach, which obliges vowed religious and celibate clergy to abstain from all genital sexual experiences.
- Second, a relaxed traditional approach, which recognizes the traditional norms but “allows for a relaxation and variation in certain limited situation.”
- Third, a complete break with tradition that morally justifies “responsible” genital sexual activity according to individual circumstance which would embrace both “committed” relationships as well as those simply for “pleasure and recreation where neither physical nor emotional harm can result.” Salm favors this approach for religious.
- And fourth, the approach favored by many feminists, that is, the complete redefinition of what chastity and celibacy means from a relational and communal perspective rather than “a patriarchal model” which views celibacy in genital terms.<sup>122</sup>

In reality what we have here is one mode of chastity and three modes of unchaste behavior since being “a little unchaste” is like being “a little bit pregnant.”

Nugent mentions, but discounts as untenable, a fifth approach for bishops and superiors of religious orders. This approach would be to deny the problem of a sexually active clergy and religious in the hope that the “problem” will disappear, resolve itself naturally, or at least be kept from becoming a source of public scandal.<sup>123</sup>

Nugent confirms the existence in both the United States and Canada of a “communications network of gay clergy and religious whose main pur-

pose is to share, through a monthly publication, areas of general interest and concern.”<sup>124</sup> He notes that “Days of reflection and weekend retreats have also been provided by the networks even though widespread publicity is impossible since an obvious need for anonymity dominates this form of support and pastoral concern.”<sup>125</sup>

Nugent is referring to Communication Ministry, Inc. (CMI). The organization conducts nation-wide retreats and gatherings for homosexual clergy and religious and their “lovers.” Although CMI was organized in Philadelphia in October 1977, it was not officially incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania until January 1982. Its underground newsletter, *Communication*, was initially published by Dignity/Philadelphia. In 1994, CMI moved its office to the “gay-friendly” Archdiocese of Chicago under Cardinal Bernardin. The organization maintains contact with the USCCB through the National Catholic AIDS Network (NCAN) and the Campaign for Human Development.<sup>126</sup>

Nugent closes his essay with a challenge to the Church to “conquer innate fears and anxieties about homosexuality in general and gay clergy and religious in particular,” so as “to improve the quality of clerical life, enhance the ministerial gifts of many priests, make celibacy itself more credible and compelling, and help other priests come to the experience that one priest recently shared: ‘I have been out with my superiors since I was a novice, and aware of my gayness, they approved me for vows and now for ordination. ...I have witnessed an evolution in myself. ...Now it is clear to me that I must find a way of replacing the cycle of repression and depression that I have inflicted on myself as a mode of ‘reconciling’ my sexuality and my vows with some as yet undiscovered pattern of expression and celebration.’”<sup>127</sup>



### *Homosexuality and the Catholic Church*

Published by New Ways in 1983 and edited by Jeannine Gramick, *Homosexuality and the Catholic Church* contains essays by well-known homosexualist “injustice collectors” including Mercy Sister Theresa Kane, past President of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Xaverian Brother Cornelius Hubbuch, Secretary-Treasurer of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, and avowed homosexual Brian McNaught.<sup>128</sup>

In her preface to the book, Gramick states that between 1973 and 1983, there was a paradigm shift in attitudes towards homosexuality in the Catholic Church, and that these changes were evident at New Ways’ “First National Symposium on Homosexuality and the Catholic Church” held in Washington, D.C. in November 1981.<sup>129</sup>

Her essay, “New Sociological Theory on Homosexuality,” discusses the role of the “social sciences, such as psychology, psychiatry, anthropology,

biology and sociology" as "a source of ethical values."<sup>130</sup> In the field of sexology, she said, "The trend among professional sexologists seems to view homosexual behavior not as a sexual deviation but rather as a sexual variation."<sup>131</sup> She nixes the idea of an "absolute reality," which views homosexual acts as a transgression against societal norms, in favor of a subjective reality that is "located in consciousness" and is "a consequence of specific interactions" which are in turn "dependent upon the situation and the individuals involved."<sup>132</sup>

Gramick defines homophobia as "any systemic judgment which advocates negative myths and stereotypes about lesbian and gay persons."<sup>133</sup> She paraphrases the theories of psychologists S. F. Morin and S. Wallace who found "that the best predictor of homophobic attitudes is a belief in the traditional family power structure, i.e., a dominant father, submissive mother and obedient children," and "traditional religious beliefs and traditional attitudes toward women."<sup>134</sup>

Nugent's essay, "Homosexuality, Celibacy, Religious Life and Ordination," opens with a plug for the canonization of the supposed "gay patron saint, Aelred of Rievaulx."<sup>135</sup> He quotes Carl Jung on the "unique" attributes homosexual people bring to religion including a "particular receptivity to spiritual realities," and "a richness of religious feelings."<sup>136</sup>

Nugent notes that by the early 1970s, some American bishops had expressed concern over the growing numbers of candidates for the priesthood who were "overtly effeminate," and, that, in fact, there were "increasing numbers of self-acknowledged homosexual males" who were seeking admission to seminaries and religious orders.<sup>137</sup>

Among already ordained gay and lesbian priests and religious, he says, there is a growing "inner need either to identify publicly with the struggles of homosexual people in church and society or to come out to avoid a sense of personal hypocrisy or duplicity."<sup>138</sup>

In a back-door attack on priestly celibacy, Nugent raises the question "does physical abstinence of itself ever have a religious value (hard to affirm if we do not want to promote an anti-sexuality attitude)?"<sup>139</sup> He goes on to quote a statement that Thomas Merton was supposed to have uttered that "conditions had changed and that celibacy even for a monk was a thing of the past."<sup>140</sup>

Sr. Theresa Kane's essay, "Civil Rights in a Church of Compassion," gives an interesting perspective to the inter-lock between the Homosexual Movement and the Feminist Movement. She traces her interest in homosexuality as a civil rights issue to early 1979 when she and five other Mercy Sisters endorsed the statement of the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights distributed by New Ways. That same year, the Mercy Sisters opened their Generalate and Motherhouse in Potomac, Md. to a New Ways-sponsored "Strategy Conference on Homophobia in the Church."<sup>141</sup>

Kane acknowledges that some Mercy Sisters did not agree with either the endorsement of the CCGCR or the use of Mercy facilities to house the New Ways' conference, but the General Administrative Team of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union, approved of the actions nevertheless.<sup>142</sup>

Kane concludes her article with a feminist plea for the Church to commit itself to "a stance of compassion." The Church also needs to overcome the "sin of sexism," and welcome a spirit of "diversity and dissent," she says.<sup>143</sup>

Another contributor to the New Ways' book is Father Charles Curran. Pontificating from his seat as a Professor of Moral Theology at the Catholic University of America, Curran dismisses the "natural law theory" in his essay "Moral Theology and Homosexuality."

Under the penumbra of what Curran calls "a theory or theology of compromise," he affirms that "for an irreversible, constitutional, or genuine homosexual, homosexual acts in the context of a loving relationship striving for permanency are objectively morally good."<sup>144</sup> However, when homosexual acts, occur outside the context of such a relationship, as in the case of pedophilia or bestiality, these acts cannot be justified, he says.<sup>145</sup>

Other essays include "Reflections of a Gay Catholic" by avowed homosexual writer Brian McNaught, "Overcoming the Structured Evil of Male Domination and Heterosexism," by feminist theologian Barbara Zanotti of the Women's Ordination Conference (WOC), and "Growing Up Lesbian and Catholic" by former Dignity official, Ann Borden.



### *Homosexuality and the Magisterium*

Edited by John Gallagher, *Homosexuality and the Magisterium—Documents from the Vatican and the U.S. Bishops 1975–1985* was published by New Ways in 1986. It purports to bring together the teachings of the Church on the issue of homosexuality.<sup>146</sup> However, as Gallagher states in his introduction, "The articulation of magisterial teaching on homogenital behavior is not the main point of most of these statements from Roman and United States Catholic sources".

Dwelling on a "simple and unnuanced repetition" of such magisterial teachings becomes "a source of oppression for gay and lesbian people," says Gallagher, and "is often seen as being prejudicial against homosexual people."<sup>147</sup>

The collection of official and unofficial statements, therefore, tends to be what Bishop Walter Sullivan calls "pastoral" in nature, and which, according to Gallagher, "best convey some sense of movement and growth in the Church's awareness of the reality of a homosexual identity in our Church and culture."<sup>148</sup>

In other words, the text is long on “homosexuality” and short on “Magisterium.”

The book identifies the following bishops, some of whom are now deceased, as being sympathetic to the Homosexual Collective—Bishop Francis Mugavero, Archbishop John R. Roach, Archbishop John R. Quinn, Archbishop Rembert Weakland, Bishop Walter Sullivan, Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, Archbishop John F. Whealon, Archbishop James A. Hickey, and Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin.

There are two full-length documents cited in the text that scream out for special comment.

The first is the April 28, 1983 statement of the Washington State Catholic Conference (WSCC) in Seattle, Wash., titled “The Prejudice Against Homosexuals and the Ministry of the Church.”

The WSCC paper is said to have been “commissioned by Church authorities to represent an official Church position,” therefore, “it does not attempt to rethink or develop substantially the Catholic position on the morality of homosexuality.”<sup>149</sup> The drafters of the document continue, “...much such rethinking and development is needed in this and all other areas of the Church’s tradition.”<sup>150</sup>

Despite the statement that the WSCC position paper is orthodox and represents “the current official position of the Church as a given for its limited purposes,” the document’s primary focus, as the title suggests, is “the nature and the reprehensibleness” of “prejudice” against homosexuals.<sup>151</sup>

According to the WSCC, “the prejudice against homosexuals is a greater infringement of the norm of Christian morality than is homosexual orientation or activity.”<sup>152</sup> The Church “can combat the evil of prejudice against homosexuals by strongly proclaiming the gross evils of prejudicial attitudes and conduct towards lesbians and gays; by fostering legislation at all levels in the State and in the ecclesiastical arena to remove systemic prejudice; and by fostering ongoing theological research and criticism with regard to its own theological tradition on homosexuality, none of which is infallibly taught,” state the drafters of the document.<sup>153</sup>

The second questionable document titled “Ministry and Homosexuality in the Archdiocese of San Francisco,” is a Pastoral Statement formulated by the Senate of Priests of San Francisco in May 1983 and approved by Archbishop John R. Quinn. It is of special significance given the large population of homosexuals who live in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The introduction to the Pastoral Statement promises fidelity to the Gospel, but it does not deliver on that promise.

For example, in a section on “Ministry to Homosexual Communities,” Father John Harvey’s Catholic support group Courage is mentioned. However, the pastoral goes on to state that for many homosexuals, groups like Courage “do not constitute a realistic avenue of personal development.”<sup>154</sup> Therefore the Church must stand ready to support other types of



organizations of Catholic homosexual men and women “in their efforts to fight homophobia,” and “help them to gain access to Church facilities for meetings.”<sup>155</sup>

The Priest Senate proposal outlines an elaborate, multi-faceted Board of Ministries to improve diocesan communication and cooperation with these groups.<sup>156</sup> Since major pro-homosexual groups like Dignity and the Metropolitan Community Churches are not specifically excluded, the reader can safely conclude that these are the organizations to which the Archdiocese of San Francisco should “build bridges.”

Certain sections of the Pastoral Statement read like Goss’ *Gay and Lesbian Manifesto*:

The whole believing community must come to appreciate the oppressive walls that have been and are being erected to cut us off from our homosexual brothers and sisters. And we must work together on all sides of those walls to tear them down, inch by inch, until the barriers of anger and misunderstanding and fear that divide us exist no more.”<sup>157</sup>

The document perceives the Catholic educational system as a potent vehicle “to sensitize their faculties and students to issues regarding homosexuality.”<sup>158</sup> It calls for a high school level “mandatory curriculum that deals with homosexuality” to be integrated into existing “sexuality, or life-planning, or science courses.”<sup>159</sup> This educational component would include “Sessions dealing with real-life experiences of homosexual men and women; their feelings of alienation, of depression, of being discriminated against, of whole personhood.”<sup>160</sup>

Most of the documents cited in *Homosexuality and the Magisterium* are not as overtly pro-homosexual and anti-Magisterial as the above two statements, but the overall selection of documents of AmChurch are skewed in favor of the Homosexual Collective within and without the Church.



### *The Vatican and Homosexuality*

*The Vatican and Homosexuality* was published in 1988 by Crossroad Publishing Company of New York and edited by Jeannine Gramick and Pat Furey (a pseudonym).<sup>161</sup> It contains 26 “reflections” on the Vatican’s 1986 *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*.<sup>162</sup> This document was a belated follow-up to an earlier work of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Persona Humana—the Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics*.<sup>163</sup>

The disastrous document *Persona Humana*, commonly referred to as the *Declaration on Sexual Ethics*, was issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Franjo Cardinal Šeper, Prefect, and was promul-

gated by Pope Paul VI on December 29, 1975. The soft, almost effeminate language used throughout the text is striking, especially when compared to traditional Church documents on sexual morality.

The relevant discourse on the question of homosexuality begins with Section VIII.

The *Declaration* states that there are two categories of homosexuals.

First, there are “homosexuals whose tendency comes from a false education, from a lack of normal sexual development, from habit, from bad example, or from other similar causes, and is transitory or at least not incurable.” Then there are “homosexuals who are definitively such because of some kind of innate instinct or a pathological constitution judged to be incurable.”<sup>164</sup>

The paradigm shift from the traditional view of homosexuality or sodomy as an acquired vice to the idea of homosexuality as an inborn condition or genetic acquisition is immediately discernable.

With regard to the congenital homosexual, the *Declaration* states that “some people conclude that their tendency is so natural that it justifies in their case homosexual relations within a sincere communion of life and love analogous to marriage, in so far as such homosexuals feel incapable of enduring a solitary life.”<sup>165</sup>

As it stands, this statement is, quite simply, a mess.

Its open ending gives the impression that “a sincere communion of life and love analogous to marriage” can actually exist in a sodomitical relationship and that such a relationship might even be meritorious for those who cannot bear the single life.

Section VIII states that sodomites who are suffering from “personal difficulties and their inability to fit into society must be given understanding and hope and ‘their culpability’...judged with prudence.”<sup>166</sup>

Even though Sacred Scripture condemns sodomy as a “serious depravity and even presented as the sad consequence of rejecting God,” the document claims this reality doesn’t “permit us to conclude that all those who suffer from this anomaly are personally responsible for it.” Say what?

Finally, at the end of Section VIII, the document concludes that homosexual acts (but not willful, lustful and perverted thoughts and words) “are intrinsically disordered and can in no case be approved.”<sup>167</sup>

Not only was this wretched piece of homosexual apologia approved by the Holy See, but it was permitted to stand uncorrected for 11 years until October 1, 1986 when Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger issued the *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexuals*.

The 1986 Letter, however, does not come out forthrightly and acknowledge the errors present in *Persona Humana* and start with a fresh slate. The confusion is further compounded by the continued use of non-defined terminology used in *Persona Humana*.<sup>168</sup>

The document's use of the term "homosexual person" is as ill advised in the 1986 *Letter* as it was in *Persona Humana*.

The *Letter* does declare, in the gentlest of terms that bugging one's neighbor is an immoral act.

"This does not mean that homosexual persons are not often generous and giving of themselves," the reader is assured, "but when they engage in homosexual activity they confirm within themselves a disordered sexual inclination which is essentially self-indulgent."<sup>169</sup>

The *Letter* deplores "violent malice in speech or in action" against "homosexual persons" without reference to the fact that violence and malice are endemic in the homosexual personality as well as the homosexual "sub-culture" to which the document pays scarce attention.<sup>170</sup>

It also encourages the hierarchy to institute special forms of pastoral care for homosexuals even though these "ministries" with the exception of Courage, have seriously compromised the Church's stand against homosexuality and in many cases have served as an inducement to sin.

As to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's suggestion that *more* sex instruction for Catholic schoolchildren, including information on homosexuality, be implemented in Catholic dioceses, one can only believe that the writers of the document have taken leave of their wits to offer such a proposal.<sup>171</sup>

The one positive note in the *Letter* is the suggestion (not order) that all support, including the use of Church facilities, should be withdrawn from any organization which seeks to undermine Church teachings. This singular admonition did, in fact, prod some American bishops to finally withdraw support for organizations like Dignity and New Ways and prohibit them from using Church facilities to launch their attacks on Catholic morality.

With this background, let us return to *The Vatican and Homosexuality*.

Among the well-known feminist and/or lesbian cohorts invited to comment on the 1986 *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons* are Sister Gramick, her SSND pro-abortion colleague Margaret Ellen Traxler, Ann Patrick Ware, a Sister of Loretto and leader of the National Coalition of American Nuns, Mary Jo Weaver, a "Herstory" feminist and a dabbler in Wicca (pagan witchcraft), and Rosemary Haughton, a Catholic convert and self-taught feminist theologian. These women reflect the growing influence of feminists on the Homosexual Movement.

Other contributors include Dominican Benedict M. Ashley, Father André Guindon, Professor of Moral Theology at St. Paul's University in Ottawa, Peter Hebblethwaite, the popular writer on Vatican affairs, Archbishop John R. Quinn of San Francisco and Robert Nugent.

In "Toward an Understanding of the Letter 'On the Pastoral Care of the Homosexual Person,'" Archbishop Quinn appears to want to distance him-

self from the document without actually publicly rejecting it.<sup>172</sup> As critic William H. Shannon notes in his "A Response to Archbishop Quinn," which follows the prelate's statement, "he (Quinn) quotes absolutely nothing from the CDF letter," but rather depends on documents like *To Live in Jesus Christ* that provide for a more sympathetic and ambiguous presentation on homosexuality.<sup>173</sup>

From a feminist viewpoint, the 1986 *Letter* from the office of Cardinal Ratzinger has no redeeming qualities whatsoever. According to Sister Ann Patrick Ware, the Vatican document fails to address "the distress" of homosexual persons and "homophobia in society."<sup>174</sup> She finds the document "harsh," "unfeeling" and "dangerous."<sup>175</sup>

Lillanna Kopp says the document is "irremediably" flawed because of "fundamentalist biblical exegesis," "prescientific church tradition," and "seriously inexact historical data."<sup>176</sup>

Mary C. Segers decries the fact that the CDF directive has ended Dignity masses in the Dioceses of Brooklyn, Buffalo, Atlanta, New York, Pensacola, and Vancouver, B.C.<sup>177</sup> According to Segers, the document is inadequate from both a juris-prudential and moral theological perspective because it "assumes an excessively rigid, narrow, reductionist definition of sexuality; it holds to a negative conception of same-sex love as inevitability disordered and sinful...and it seems to overlook women's experience."<sup>178</sup> The Church "can learn from lesbian feminists a more subtle, rich appreciation of same-sex love," she says, and instead of "pronouncing homosexuality to be an evil...might focus on healthy, committed same-sex relationships which provide the setting and conditions for moral and spiritual growth."<sup>179</sup>

In "Rome Speaks, the Church Responds," Jeannine Gramick states that, "Lesbians and gay Catholics, privately and publicly, have called the Vatican letter disgusting and vile," but she hopes that they "can bring themselves to forgive the pride, lack of compassion, and self-righteousness which are part of the scandals of the Roman Catholic Church."<sup>180</sup> Gramick criticizes the 1986 *Letter* as being, "preoccupied, almost to the point of obsession, with genital activity" but silent on issues of "social justice, prejudice and violence against homosexual persons."<sup>181</sup>

In "Compassion and Orientation," Dominican Benedict M. Ashley states he entirely agrees with the substance of the Vatican document. However, he makes a number of statements and assumptions that tend to support the homosexualist position.

Father Ashley talks of homosexuality in general and homosexual orientation in particular, as a "disability," which "prevents one not from loving sexually, but heterosexually, and therefore from the ability to make a permanent and procreative marriage commitment."<sup>182</sup> He uses the Homosexual Collective's term "homophobia" in an uncritical manner claiming that "many heterosexuals are not secure in their orientation..."

and that these “homophobic Catholics are scandalized at forms of ministry that seem to condone homosexuality.”<sup>183</sup> Thus we have to be compassionate, not only toward “struggling gays” but the majority of people who fear that the Church is “getting soft,” on homosexuality, says Father Ashley.<sup>184</sup>

Church ministry to homosexuals should, according to Ashley, advocate the protection of civil rights for homosexuals, give special prominence to AIDS ministry, and foster support groups which are consistent with the teachings of the Church as well as solid family life where children can achieve “heterosexual maturity.”<sup>185</sup>

In closing, Ashley asks “forgiveness” for having “offended” any homosexual by his use of “language that may seem condemnatory, or lacking in sensitivity.”<sup>186</sup> He also notes that while the 1986 document can be criticized “on details of expression or a lack of nuance” inevitable in a brief document directed at clearing up past ambiguities, nevertheless, it speaks a truth which is not “destructive but healing.”<sup>187</sup>

Perhaps the most original, and therefore, the most interesting of the essays, is Peter Hebblethwaite’s “Please Don’t Shoot the Bearer of Bad Tidings: An Open letter on Cardinal Ratzinger’s Document.”

As his title implies, Hebblethwaite goes right for the jugular when he states that the Church will *never* budge on the matter of the objective and intrinsic sinfulness of homosexual acts which is based upon natural law arguments.<sup>188</sup> He advises homosexual enthusiasts to avoid the common pitfall of imagining that “what I *wanted to happen* was actually *going to happen*.”<sup>189</sup>

Hebblethwaite does, however, offer Catholic homosexuals some unsolicited advice—“rules” he calls them. He suggests that they remain in the Church, that they not repay insults from Cardinal Ratzinger in kind, that they watch out for unguarded claims, and continue with AIDS ministries.<sup>190</sup>

*The Vatican and Homosexuality* concludes with the essay “How the Church Can Learn from Gays and Lesbians,” by ex-Jesuit John Giles Milhaven, a board member of Catholics for A Free Choice and pro-abortion theorist of “delayed animation.” Editors Gramick and Furey identify Milhaven as a Professor of Religious Studies at Brown University in Providence, R. I.

According to Milhaven, “The Catholic Church has at present no sexual ethics,” that is, “sexual ethics that anyone pays attention to.”<sup>191</sup> His main complaint is that the Church makes “its judgments on the nature and value of sex without a single reasoned appeal to the experience of sex.”<sup>192</sup> Since it is “the task of the theologian to help the rest of the Church by drawing with broad conceptual strokes a model of the moral life,” he says, “Gay and lesbian Catholics could help the theologian by doing what they themselves (unless they are also theologians) don’t need to do: put into general terms why sex is important to them.”<sup>193</sup>

Although the Vatican's 1975 *Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics* certainly strengthened the position of the Homosexual Collective in the Church, and the 1986 *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*, did little to disturb the day-to-day activities of Catholic homosexual clergy and religious, it is interesting to note that groups like New Ways and Dignity still felt the need to push the envelope even when it was not to their great advantage to do so. The Collective views all attempts by the Vatican to flatter and cajole it into submission as a sign of weakness and an invitation for further attack—a perception which is unfortunately all too correct.



### *Homosexuality in the Priesthood and the Religious Life*

*Homosexuality in the Priesthood and Religious Life* edited by Jeannine Gramick and published by Crossroad Publishers in 1989 is a valuable book in terms of the insights it offers into the early inner-workings of the homosexual network within the Church especially the role played by New Ways and various homosexual auxiliary groups within Catholic dioceses and religious orders in the 1970s.<sup>194</sup>

Contributors include homosexual historian John Boswell, radical feminist Rosemary Radford Ruether of Women-Church, and pro-abortion Daniel C. Maguire of Marquette University. Other contributors like Capuchin Richard J. Cardarelli, a self-avowed homosexual, and Father John P. Hilgeman, who has been active in the gay politics since 1974, are less known outside of clerical “gay” circles.

Editor Gramick provides a timetable for in-house organizational interest in the issue of homosexuality among Catholic priests and religious starting in the 1970s.<sup>195</sup>

Gramick states that in 1977, a small group of Christian Brothers held a “sexuality” study/seminar which resulted in the booklet *Sexuality and Brotherhood* containing an essay by Gabriel Moran that suggests religious life “might provide a stable setting for the working out of homosexual love,” and that religious organizations should be “a natural bridge for the meeting of straight and gay worlds.”<sup>196</sup> In 1982, Gramick says, that same study group issued *Prejudice*, a booklet tackling the theological and sociological aspects of “homophobia.”<sup>197</sup>

About the same time that the Christian Brothers broke the internal barrier of silence on the issue of homosexuality among clergy and religious, Gramick says, the Jesuits broached the issue of homosexuality in their periodical *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*.<sup>198</sup>

In 1978, Gramick reports, the National Assembly of Religious Women published an interview with two lesbian nuns.<sup>199</sup> The following year, the

National Conference of Vocation Directors of Men published an article on homosexual candidates for the priesthood.<sup>200</sup>

In the late 1970s, Father John Harvey formed Renewal, Rest, and Re-Creation to directly minister to homosexual priests and religious in accordance with the tenets of the Catholic Church, says Gramick. At the same time, Communication Ministry, Inc. began to network and organize homosexual clergy and religious at the grassroots level. A third group, New Ways Ministry, was also formed in 1977, says Gramick. One of its earliest projects was a retreat for lesbian nuns who apparently were distressed that male clergy and religious were dominating the homosexual retreat scene.<sup>201</sup>

Gramick notes that public awareness of homosexual priests began to grow in the 1980s as media revelations of clerical sexual abuse of minors began to dominate the airways. "Although adult homosexuality and pedophilia are distinct clinical categories," she says, "gay priests have unfortunately been linked to this dysfunctional behavior in the public's mind."<sup>202</sup> It is significant that Gramick refers to pederasty as "dysfunctional," rather than "criminal" behavior.

A segment of *Homosexuality in the Priesthood and Religious Life* is devoted to essays by lesbian nuns and homosexual brothers and priests who, in the words of Gramick, "are claiming their own pride and goodness and following the Gospel mandate to let their light shine instead of hiding them under a bushel or in a closet."<sup>203</sup>

In "Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace," avowed homosexual Father Richard J. Cardarelli, recalls that he knew from an early age that he was "somehow different from other boys."<sup>204</sup> After a troubled youth, he said, he entered religious life as a means of hiding his "real identity" as a homosexual and to "learn how to be someone else."<sup>205</sup> Sadly, he says, the walls of the Capuchin monastery were unable to protect him from "those sexual feelings and emotional attractions to others," or the "homophobia" that was "rampant" within the order.<sup>206</sup>

Cardarelli says he sought spiritual guidance from a Franciscan friar connected to Dignity/Boston who assured him that it *was* possible to "be a priest and be gay."<sup>207</sup> Shortly afterwards, in 1974, Cardarelli left the novitiate to find himself within the embrace of the Homosexual Collective. Eventually, having been "cured" of his "self-hatred," and the "deadly effects of homophobia," he returned to his order, received therapy for alcoholism and was ordained a Capuchin priest, he says.<sup>208</sup> Throughout this period he remained active in Dignity and served as its chaplain.

"I am convinced that my sensitivity to the suffering of others and my compassionate commitment to justice and peace concerns are due to my homosexuality and the long process of accepting it," says the Capuchin priest.<sup>209</sup> They asked Jesus "Are you a king," and they ask him (Cardarelli), "Are you a queen," and he replies, "Yes...I am a priest. I am gay. I am proud..."<sup>210</sup>

In addition to maintaining an association with Dignity, Carderelli has also maintained close contact with New Ways.

Other homosexuals who tell their “story” in *Homosexuality in the Priesthood and Religious Life* are Trappist monk Matthew Kelty, the noted spiritual writer and confessor to (Fr. Lewis) Thomas Merton, artist William Hart McNichols, SJ, and Sister Judith Whitacre.

In the final section of the book dealing with “Ministerial Perspectives” we find essays by Fr. Robert Nugent on “Homosexuality and Seminary Candidates,” Sister Gramick on “Lesbian Nuns: Identity, Affirmation, and Gender,” and Fr. John P. Hilgeman, “The Sycamore Is Not the Only Kind of Tree Outside My Window,” an essay on how the Church can assist “gay seminarians, priests, and religious,” by “giving positive messages about homosexuality from the earliest stages of formation,” by rejecting “homophobia,” by encouraging people to “risk the journey of growth,” while climbing the often “rocky and uncertain” path to the virtues of celibacy and chastity, and by encouraging “positive and healthy role models for them,” in terms “of openly gay priests, religious, bishops and popes for the gay community.”<sup>211</sup>



### *The Road to Emmaus—Daily Encounters with the Risen Christ*

This “inclusive devotional,” was published by Emmaus Press in 1989 and is distributed by New Ways.<sup>212</sup> The editor of *The Road to Emmaus* is Joseph W. Houle, an avowed homosexual and Director of Emmaus House of Prayer of the Mid-Atlantic District of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches in Washington, DC.

In his preface, Houle says that the text “has been provided by writers who are either openly gay and lesbian Christians or who actively support gay and lesbian Christians in their struggle for self-esteem and full acceptance in the world and in the church.”<sup>213</sup>

Jeannine Gramick and Robert Nugent provide the meditations for January.

Not unexpectedly, while these Scriptural meditations are not particularly religious, they are thoroughly political.

In her January 3rd meditation (John 10:7–17), Gramick whines, “I have seen the bands of ecclesiastical predators expel lesbians and gay Christians from our churches, relegate women to second-class citizenship, and support government policies that oppress the poor...”

In her January 11th meditation, Gramick writes, “...I also need to meet our Father-Mother God in a quiet place.”

In her January 13th meditation, the nun’s thoughts drift to modern day self-righteous “pariahs” such as “the religious leaders who enforce doctrinal orthodoxy at the expense of God’s command to love,” and “politicians,



business people, and scientists who perpetuate a military-industrial complex that keeps the Third World supplied with weapons instead of food.”

Issues related to the ordination of women to the priesthood and to homosexual “unions” arise in Gramick’s January 14th meditation when she prays to Jesus to abolish unjust laws. “...I bring to you church laws which prohibit women from being ordained to the priesthood or which bar homosexual persons from having their committed relationships blessed,” she prays.

The hierarchy gets another blast in Gramick’s January 25th meditation (Mark 6:14–29) in which she ponders, “Like Herod, some of our church leaders are also so drunk with power that they seek to control the intimate, private lives of others. They save face by appealing to church doctrine, all the while failing to ask forgiveness for past and present religious intolerance, racism and sexism.”

In his meditations, Nugent makes use of the thoughts of some modernist prototypes such as Dutch Dominican Edward Schillebeeckx, Nikos Kazantzakis, author of *The Last Temptation of Christ*, and homosexual activist Brian McNaught.

In his January 7th meditation (John 2:1–11), Nugent reflects on “Weddings and Holy Unions” but without mentioning the words “husband and wife.” Instead, he uses the neutered term “couples” or “partners.” Similarly, he gives a plug for alternative family structures in his January 17th meditation (Mark 5:1–20) when he prays “...He (Jesus) simply makes it clear that commitments to the reign supersedes all family ties. Like Jesus, we need family loyalty. And, like Jesus, we often find our loyalties in other kinds of families, especially among those who support and nourish our commitments to personal integrity.”

In his January 20th meditation (Mark 4:35–41), Nugent expresses his fear of drowning in “the debates and polarization that rock the church-ark over issues of human sexuality, nuclear weapons, capital punishment, abortion and authority.”

The issue of outmoded religious “symbols and signs (doctrines, practices, acts, objects)” is the theme of Nugent’s January 28th meditation (Mark 7:1–23). “He (Jesus) performed the prescribed rituals and prayed the required prayers, but in a way that illuminated their true meaning. And when they were empty and meaningless, he did not hesitate to transform them, replace them, or discard them,” Nugent meditates.



***“Homosexuality: Protestant, Catholic and Jewish Issues:  
A Fishbone Tale”***

This important essay by Robert Nugent and Jeannine Gramick originally appeared in *Homosexuality and Religion*, edited by Richard Hasbany,

Ph.D. and published by Harrington Park Press in 1989.<sup>214</sup> Harrington Park Press is an imprint of Haworth Press, Inc., with offices in New York, London and Oxford, and caters to gay, lesbian and gender interests.<sup>215</sup> The article was later reproduced in booklet form and distributed by New Ways.

The appearance of "Homosexuality: Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish Issues: A Fishbone Tale" in a prominent secular journal on homosexuality is one indication of the expanding influence of Gramick and Nugent in homosexual circles outside of the Catholic Church.

As the title "A Fishbone Tale" suggests, Nugent and Gramick compare homosexuality to "a fishbone caught in the church's throat that the church can neither eject nor swallow entirely."<sup>216</sup> Therefore, homosexuals "struggling for full acceptance in the church must confront the classical understanding of the human being and human sexual differentiation as these concepts have traditionally influenced the churches."<sup>217</sup>

The authors present the statements of major figures in the mainline U.S. Christian denominations and branches of Judaism "who have spoken publicly and urged study and reassessment of the traditional teachings and practices regarding homosexuality" and "contemporary major church studies and policy statements of several Christian denominations."<sup>218</sup> Nugent and Gramick also outline and critique "several possible ecclesial stances on homosexuality and articulate some of the common theological and pastoral concerns" that these Christian denominations share."<sup>219</sup>

The essay begins with a discussion of various "models" or approaches to homosexuality. The first model is the "religious" model that characterizes homosexuality as a direct result of personal, moral failure or of a deliberate sin for which the individual is held accountable, blameworthy, and sometimes even punished either in this world or the next."<sup>220</sup> Then there is the "medical" model that views homosexuality as an "illness."<sup>221</sup> Finally there is the contemporary "essentialist/scientific" model which holds that "true homosexual orientation is established at a relatively early stage of development in the individual, is permanent and generally impervious to techniques for radical change."<sup>222</sup>

In terms of the morality of sexual acts, homosexual or otherwise, Nugent and Gramick claim that there is "a trend among many moralists in all denominations today who question whether there are *any human acts that can be labeled intrinsically evil* when judged apart from other considerations such as consequences, the intention of the acting person, and...the tensions between the moral values and disvalues associated with all human acts."<sup>223</sup>

Gramick and Nugent cite the early works of Jesuit theologian John McNeill and Charles Curran as contributing to the "reexamination of traditional church teachings" in the "Roman Catholic scholarly community."<sup>224</sup> They also cite "Vatican II's abandonment of the 'primary' and 'secondary' language when speaking of the procreational and unitive aspects of hetero-

sexual intercourse in marriage” as an indication that “some contemporary moralists had begun to question the value and viability of an act-centered morality and encouraged the use of more personal criteria such as the relational aspects of human sexuality.”<sup>225</sup>

The authors applaud the 1977 Catholic Theological Society of America report *Human Sexuality—New Directions in American Catholic Thought* for its stress on “creative growth for integration as the chief purpose or basic finality of sexual intercourse, as opposed to the procreative and unitive dimension that classical Roman Catholic doctrine teaches.”<sup>226</sup>

Gramick and Nugent place the position of various denominations on the morality of homosexuality into four categories.

The first is the “rejecting-punitive” approach that views “both the homogenital expression and the homosexual condition/orientation as sinful and prohibited by God.”<sup>227</sup> Gramick and Nugent reject this approach in *toto*.

The second approach is “rejecting-nonpunitive.”<sup>228</sup> Religions that hold this position condemn homogenital *acts* as being contrary to human nature, but do not reject homosexual persons, explain the authors. Nugent and Gramick reject this approach to “a doctrine of unchanging nature,” and suggest that “God is doing something new; part of a new, ongoing creation is found in believing, faith and Spirit-filled homosexual Christians whose experience, values, and decisions about their lifestyles have something positive to say to the larger church.”<sup>229</sup>

The third approach is the “qualified acceptance position,” that approves of homosexual genital as an acceptable way of living out the Christian life,” but one that remains inferior to heterosexuality.<sup>230</sup> This “compromise” position, the authors claim, is reflected in the 1980 Catholic Social Welfare Commission report for the Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, but it is not satisfactory to them because it sees heterosexuality as “necessarily the human ideal.”<sup>231</sup>

The fourth and final approach and one that Nugent and Gramick embrace is the “full acceptance position,” that evaluates “wholesome sexuality” in terms of “intercommunication,” that is “the nature and quality of the relationship of the persons involved, regardless of gender.”<sup>232</sup> According to Nugent and Gramick, the latter position views homosexuality as “part of the divine plan of creation,” and “that homosexual people are present as a sign of the rich diversity of creation, and that homosexual expression is as natural and good in every way as heterosexuality.”<sup>233</sup>

In connection with this approach, Nugent and Gramick mention the “sex-for-recreation” category.<sup>234</sup>

Here, “there are no claims other than the free consent of the persons involved,” they state.<sup>235</sup> Using this criterion, the authors speculate that “...some would argue that if homogenital behavior is humanly good and natural, then logically it ought not be reserved to constitutionally homosexual

persons; others would be free to choose this form of sexual expression as a legitimate variant or preference in sexual relationships.”<sup>236</sup>

All in all, Nugent and Gramick hope that the issues raised in the article “will be explored and developed even further,” but they admit that the lesbian and gay struggle will be a painful and difficult one and that for many, “the changes will not be substantial enough or come soon enough.”<sup>237</sup>

“If a paradigm shift is occurring in the churches and synagogues, then gay men and lesbian women will have an even more important part to play in helping explore, understand and embrace that shift. If war is too important to leave to the generals, then spirituality and sexuality are too important to leave to the theologians and hierarchical leaders,” conclude Nugent and Gramick.<sup>238</sup>

Readers will want to keep in mind that “*A Fishbone Tale*” must have been written about the time the Maida Commission was instituted in March of 1988 or a short time later since Haworth Press published *Homosexuality and Religion* in 1989. More importantly, there are no references to this important essay in the final Maida Commission Report.



### ***Building Bridges—Gay and Lesbian Reality and the Catholic Church***

*Building Bridges*, by Robert Nugent and Jeannine Gramick, published in 1992 by Twenty-Third Publications, is a pivotal publication in the history of New Ways and in the life of its authors as it became the focal point of the reactivated Maida Commission in 1994.<sup>239</sup>

The book is dedicated to those persons who made New Ways possible, that is, the Superiors of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Society of the Divine Savior in the U.S. and Rome including U.S. Provincials, Sisters Francis Regis Carton, Ruth Marie May, Patricia Flynn and Christine Mulcahy and the SSND Generalate leaders in Rome, Mother Georgianne Segner and Mother Mary Margaret Joha, and U.S. Salvatorian Provincials, Fathers Myron Wagner, Justin Pierce, Barry Griffin and Paul Portland and SDS Superiors in Rome, Gerard Rogowski and Malachy McBride.

Except for Nugent’s novel idea that the Church should set up a “new model of ministry” composed solely of priests and religious who have AIDS or are HIV-positive, there is not an original idea in the book.<sup>240</sup> Nugent and Gramick simply regurgitate the arguments for homosexuality put forth by the secular Homosexual Collective.

In “Gay and Lesbian Rights” Nugent hails the coming of age of the “gay liberation movement” at the Stonewall Inn in 1969. He says that homosexuals are “born that way” and, therefore, must be true to their nature. He dismisses the idea that AIDS is related to sodomy. He predicts that “the struggle for gay rights will continue and expand in the coming years.”<sup>241</sup>

Gramick likewise frames the question of “gay rights” in terms of “liberation” and a new “declaration of independence.”<sup>242</sup> She admits that “many gay males in the visible gay subculture are promiscuous,” but she blames this on “social and cultural factors” which make it difficult for homosexual men and women to have “stable relationships.”<sup>243</sup>

She states that “Most experts now believe that a change in orientation, i.e., in desire and attraction, is not possible.”<sup>244</sup> Although Gramick admits that “an obvious function of the genital organs is reproduction,” she wonders, “If other parts of the body may serve multiple purposes, why is it that the sexual parts may not?”<sup>245</sup> “Placing a hierarchy of value on bodily parts,” Gramick says, “leads to an idolatry or sacralization of some parts.”<sup>246</sup> One cannot talk of the natural law, says the nun, since nature is “dynamic and always in a state of flux.”<sup>247</sup> Gramick decries “extreme, subtle and personal homophobia.”<sup>248</sup>

Among the options Nugent offers to married homosexuals is that of maintaining an “open relationship” whereby the homosexual partner (and sometimes the heterosexual partner) can “seek out genital relationships with an understanding that these will not become an emotional threat to the primary commitment.”<sup>249</sup> He does note, however, that AIDS has made this solution somewhat problematic.<sup>250</sup>

One of the authorities that Gramick calls upon to support her theory that “many, if not most basically heterosexual persons experience some degree of same-sex feelings, fantasies, desires, or attraction,” is the notorious homosexual/pederast, Rev. Paul Shanley. The nun describes Shanley as “the Boston ‘street priest of the 1960s’ [who] used to point out that almost everyone has a sexual ‘major’ and ‘minor.’”<sup>251</sup>

It is one of the telling characteristics of all New Ways’ publications, and the writings of Gramick and Nugent in particular, that the problem of homosexual pederasty and the unbelievable tragedy and moral chaos clerical predators leave in their wake, is rarely acknowledged much less addressed.

On the matter of admitting homosexuals into the priesthood, Nugent suggests that anyone opposed to the practice needs to undergo deprogramming for “homophobia.”<sup>252</sup> “Some gay candidates are challenging us to explore appropriate expressions of sexuality and intimacy in religious life,” he states.<sup>253</sup> “We have to face a new reality that some people come to the seminary or religious life either with an entirely different working definition of celibacy or with simply an *a priori* rejection of the traditional understanding that excludes genital intimacy,” he adds.<sup>254</sup>

A homosexual candidate for the priesthood may have strong attachments to his gay network of friends, says Nugent, and “he will certainly expect to maintain contact with some of them and expect that they will be welcomed into the seminary or congregation’s houses with warmth and hospitality.”<sup>255</sup> In other words, a diocese or religious order that accepts

homosexual candidates, is also expected to accept homosexuals from the outside as guests at the seminary or house of religion.

In his essay "Theological Contributions of the U.S. Church," Nugent quotes Fr. Richard McCormick's theories of "proportionalism" and "subjectivity" whereby one judges the morality of homosexual acts by "the meaning and pattern of homosexual acts in the person's life."<sup>256</sup> Nugent states that "McCormick and others attempting to renew Roman Catholic morality believe that morality is too often equated with acts, especially external ones."<sup>257</sup>

Among the U.S. Catholic theologians cited by Gramick who have challenged the traditional teachings of the Church on the inherent sinfulness of sodomy are John McNeill, Margaret Farley, Rosemary Ruether, and Daniel Maguire.<sup>258</sup>

In her closing essay "Lesbian/Gay Theology and Spirituality: The New Frontier," Gramick claims that "Although a gay and lesbian spirituality began to be formally constructed only since the late 1970s, lesbian and gay persons long incarnated a spirituality that put them uniquely in touch with the transcendent."<sup>259</sup>

"Only when there is no societal, economic, or religious prejudice felt by an individual because of his or her sexual orientation, gender, color, religious, or political beliefs, can the church claim that humankind is beginning to feel on this earth the freedom of the daughters and sons of God," Gramick concludes.

There are no surprises in *Building Bridges*. It is simply a political exercise in pro-homosexual apologetics.



### *Voices of Hope—A Collection of Positive Catholic Writings on Gay and Lesbian Issues*

*Voices of Hope—A Collection of Positive Catholic Writings on Gay and Lesbian Issues*, is edited by Jeannine Gramick and Robert Nugent, and is published by New Ways Ministry and the Center for Homophobia Education. The book was published in 1995—a year *after* the Maida Commission completed its work and made its findings and recommendations public.<sup>260</sup>

The book's revelation of the political intrigues of Gramick and Nugent in connection with the 1992 Vatican statement *Some Considerations Concerning the Catholic Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons* demonstrates their utter contempt for legitimate ecclesiastical authority and their undying devotion to the Homosexual Collective.

*Voices of Hope* opens with a compendium of statements favorable to the Homosexual Collective made by American bishops and other Catholic bishops from England and Europe, the United States National Conference

of Catholic Bishops and the United States Catholic Conference (NCCB/USCC) and other national conferences, religious orders and diocesan organizations, Catholic national newspapers and magazines, and apologists for the Homosexual Collective from 1973 to 1995.

Among the most interesting inclusions in this anthology is “Called to Blessing: A Pastoral Letter on Faith and Homosexuality,” issued by the Working Group of Catholic Gay Pastors, Huissen, the Netherlands in 1989.

The pastoral letter notes that, “With few exceptions, our bishops, both nationally and internationally, appear incapable of speaking liberating words...about homosexuality and gay and lesbian relationships in particular,” and “...the Working Group as a whole and some of its members as individuals are confronted with rejection by bishops.”<sup>261</sup> Thus, the need to appeal directly to “our brothers and sisters in the Dutch Catholic Church.”<sup>262</sup>

The Working Group recalls that in May 1994, the Dutch bishops issued a mandate forbidding Catholic membership in a number of political and social organizations including the Bond for Sexual Reform (later renamed the Netherlands Society for Sexual Reform).<sup>263</sup>

Despite the Dutch bishops’ actions, however, “liberation” of all kinds including sexual liberation appeared to be “irrevocable,” says the Working Group, especially since the Second Vatican Council. The idea that “sexuality is intended exclusively for procreation” is passé, it claims, and “this criticism of traditional morality has brought with it a stronger emphasis on personal conscience,” and a “new view of homosexuality.”<sup>264</sup>

The Working Group points to the publication of *A Person Does Not Have To Be Alone* by the Dutch Council of Churches in 1977 which states that homosexuality is not an illness and that homosexual expressions based on love are just as legitimate as heterosexual ones.<sup>265</sup> The Vatican nixed the Council report, but the Dutch bishops were divided on it. No further action was taken on the formulation of a joint statement on homosexuality between the Dutch Council of Churches and the Dutch bishops.<sup>266</sup>

In opposition to Church doctrine that condemns homosexual acts, the Working Group proclaims the primacy of the homosexual “experience” and the conviction that “homosexual people can give expression to their longings in ways that are good, ways that make them whole, and which affirm them in their faith in God’s love for them and for the world,” and that “homosexual friendships and relationships can be made publicly known and are deserving of all respect there.”<sup>267</sup>

The Working Group decries the use of Scripture, as in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, as a weapon against homosexual people which has resulted in “cruelty and even bloodshed.”<sup>268</sup> However, it notes, there are “gay friendly” passages to be found in Scripture such as “the liberation from slavery in Egypt,” and “the destruction of the bonds of death.”<sup>269</sup>

Unlike the Catholic Church, the Working Group says it stands ready to see "reality as it is." It rejects the old tradition of hiding away "scandals" in the Church, especially since this is no longer possible "because the reality of homosexuality, both its pleasant and unpleasant sides, is visible in public life and thought."<sup>270</sup> To suggest that boys and girls "normally" have heterosexual sexual drives or to retain the expression "marital act" for sexual intercourse, the Working group observes, "obscures the facts."<sup>271</sup> There are many types of homosexual and heterosexual expressions, it states, including a "permanent relationship, a series of relationships, multiple partners without any permanent commitment or a life of celibacy."<sup>272</sup>

Within "an extensive gay culture" that exists in the West, the Working Group states, "homoerotic themes can be found everywhere in artistic expression ...there are churches which cater to homosexuals, and there are commercial enterprises where much money is spent and earned in connection with homosexuality."<sup>273</sup> "These range from the press, fashion, health clubs and tourist industry, to prostitution, pornography and sex-tourism," the Working Group candidly explains.<sup>274</sup>

The Working Group urges homosexuals to follow the admonition of Saint Paul: "Do not model yourselves on the behavior of the world around you, but let your behavior change, modeled on a new mind. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2).

But exactly what is the Working Group's interpretation of putting on a "new mind?"

It certainly is not abandoning homosexual behavior, for the authors make it very clear that, "sexual abstinence is not *per se*, and for most, not the way there," and neither does "the way lie for anyone in the denial of one's sexual desires."<sup>275</sup>

Rather, the Working Group speaks in terms of avoiding domination over and misuse of others, avoiding materialism, and eschewing esteem from peers in order to find "the vision of peace in which people are attractive for each other and in which they freely promote each other's good, both physical and spiritual."<sup>276</sup>

Putting on a "new mind," according to the Working Group, means rejecting "the traditional definition of family, marriage and parent-child models" and "the inevitable connection between sex and procreation."<sup>277</sup> It means rejecting "stereotyped images and roles, especially those based on gender."<sup>278</sup> It means taking an "integrated approach" to sexuality, in which homosexuality "will be considered as one form of sexuality and relationships, alongside others."<sup>279</sup> It means that "gay and lesbian unions be taken seriously in a religious context."<sup>280</sup> It means acceptance of "actively homosexual lay pastors" who are not bound by the same vows of celibacy or chastity that binds homosexual and heterosexual priests and religious.<sup>281</sup>



“Called to Blessing: A Pastoral Letter on Faith and Homosexuality” is signed by six members of the Working Group of Catholic Gay Pastors: Father Prof. Drs Theo Beemer, Drs Cor Hoegen, Drs Jan van Hooydonk, Father Theo Schermer, SJ and Father Jan Schlatmann.<sup>282</sup>

Throughout the text of the more than 100 statements found in *Voices of Hope* can be found many themes that are fully consistent with the philosophy and agenda of the Homosexual Collective such as:

- Homosexuals do not choose their sexual orientation and cannot change that orientation.
- Support for civil legislation that bans discrimination on account of sexual orientation in the areas of employment, housing and public accommodations.
- Church support for civil and religious “unions” of homosexual partners.
- The image of homosexuals as “a suffering people,” who require “special parish ministry” because they suffer from “societal rejection” and other “homophobic” prejudices.
- Support for the inclusion of “gays” in the military.
- Scripture writers were ignorant of contemporary social science findings related to “constitutional or irreversible homosexual orientation” and their condemnations against sodomy were actually directed against abuses of “hospitality, blackmail, prostitution, and especially idolatry,” rather than homosexual acts *per se*.<sup>283</sup>
- “Homophobia” is a greater infringement of the norm of Christian morality than is homosexual orientation or activity.
- Any connection between child molestation and homosexuality is the result of unfounded prejudice and “homophobic” fears.<sup>284</sup>
- Homosexual people have special gifts including spiritual gifts which “can help alleviate the religious impoverishment of society and the Church, an impoverishment that is due largely to the poor imagery for communicating the secret of the Unspeakable.”<sup>285</sup>

Part Three of *Voices of Hope* is devoted to criticism of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith statement “Some Considerations Concerning the Catholic Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons,” issued in June 1992. An official and revised version of the statement was printed in the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* on July 24, 1992.<sup>286</sup>

The 1992 Vatican statement reiterates major points of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s 1986 *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons* including condemnation of civil legislation which directly or indirectly serves to legitimize homosexual acts or lifestyle.

The 1992 statement, rejects outright the idea that “sexual orientation” is akin to race, ethnic background, etc., in respect to non-discrimination, and affirms that it is not “unjust discrimination” to consider the issue of sexual orientation in dealing with public policies related to adoption, foster care, the teaching or coaching of children or military recruitment.<sup>287</sup> Further, in terms of defending and promoting family life and insuring the common good, the revised 1992 document states that church authorities can neither “endorse nor remain neutral toward adverse legislation even if it grants exceptions to church organizations and institutions.”<sup>288</sup> “The church has the responsibility to promote family life and the public morality of the entire civil society on the basis of fundamental moral values, not simply to protect herself from the application of harmful laws,” the document concludes.<sup>289</sup>

Obviously, the 1992 statement strikes at the very heart of the basic tenets of the Homosexual Collective, so it is not surprising that New Ways was instrumental in organizing Catholic opposition to the position paper especially among Catholic clergy and religious. In *Voices of Hope*, Gramick and Nugent confide to their readers how this was done.

They note that initially, the Apostolic Nunciature sent the original draft of the June 1992 statement of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to officials at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. It was then distributed, without comment or publicity, to all the American bishops on June 25 by the NCCB’s General Secretary, Msgr. Robert Lynch.

With perhaps the exception of the Italian bishops, the low-level, unsigned document was directed principally at the American hierarchy. The author of *Some Considerations* was most likely an American familiar with the Homosexual Movement and its “gay rights” agenda, claim Gramick and Nugent.<sup>290</sup>

Gramick and Nugent state that the original text of the 1992 document was kept secret from the larger Catholic community. However, New Ways obtained a copy of the document from either a cooperative bishop or a friendly contact inside the NCCB/USCC, and it was released to the Catholic and secular press along with New Ways’ own critical analysis of the Vatican statement on homosexuality and the politics of discrimination.<sup>291</sup> The fact that New Ways could brag it had access to a copy of the quasi-secret document indicates how well connected it is to the NCCB/USCC. Traditional Catholics, on the other hand, had no such access to the document.

The Vatican’s reaction to the exposé was to reissue a second version of the document with some minor changes on July 24, 1992. Opus Dei Vatican Press Secretary Dr. Joaquin Navarro-Valls issued an accompanying press release that minimized the impact of the document by stating that it was not intended “to pass judgment” on previous bishops’ or state conference actions in the arena of homosexual gay civil rights legislation, and that it was “not intended to be an official and public instruction ...but a background

resource offering discreet assistance to those who may be confronted with the task of evaluating draft legislation regarding non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.”<sup>292</sup>

Gramick and Nugent said that the reception of the Vatican document was generally *pro forma* by the American hierarchy.

However, Bishops Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit, Walter Sullivan of Richmond, and Charles Buswell of Pueblo, did sign a New Ways protest ad containing 1,621 signatures that appeared in the November 13, 1992 issue of the *National Catholic Reporter*. The ad was timed to coincide with the NCCB’s annual meeting in Washington, D.C. A copy of the ad was presented to former NCCB President Bishop James Malone.<sup>293</sup> Cardinal Joseph Bernardin and Archbishops Thomas Murphy and John Quinn subsequently announced that their archdiocesan policies of defending human and civil rights for homosexuals would remain the same.<sup>294</sup>

*Voices of Hope* features a multitude of statements in opposition to the 1992 Vatican statement by an assortment of Catholic bishops, Catholic newspapers, members of religious orders and, of course, New Ways.



## New Ways Publications Subvert Catholic Doctrine

So here we have it.

Can there be any doubt in the reader’s mind that New Ways uses its publications to undermine and subvert the Church’s teachings on homosexuality?

Even where the official position of the Church is *stated* (however deficiently), it is clear that the position is not *upheld* by New Ways and its founders, Sister Jeannine Gramick and Father Robert Nugent.

One has to wonder why it took the Maida Commission five years to discover this obvious and simple fact.

## Gramick and Nugent Road Show Continues

In March 1990, Gramick and Nugent were back in Oakland, Calif. with another “homophobia” workshop sponsored by the Center for Homophobia Education.<sup>295</sup> The workshop was attended by about 40 people including priests, religious brothers, nuns and laity. All information packets handed out to attendees contained copies of New Ways’ newsletter, *Bondings*.

Pro-life writer Edward C. Freiling covered the seminar and filed his report with *The Wanderer* on March 22, 1990.<sup>296</sup>

Freiling said that the object lesson of the workshop was simple to discern—homosexuality is normal and homophobia is sick. “Rather than calling it a ‘homophobia workshop,’” Freiling said, “a more accurate

description would have been 'desensitizing to and indoctrination for homosexuality.'"<sup>297</sup> His observation on the personal demeanor of Gramick and Nugent was that the latter was "the less ingratiating member of the team."<sup>298</sup>

On the upside, Freiling concluded:

The principal value of the workshop was that it alerted the attendee to the great danger the homosexual movement poses for both potential recruits and traditional values. It provided hard evidence for Randy Engel's observation in the Feb. 8th issue of *The Wanderer*: "The growing number of homosexual and pedophile priests and brothers and lesbian nuns have formed a fifth column within the Church in the United States."<sup>299</sup>

One of Nugent and Gramick's most controversial gatherings took place the following spring on April 9, 1991 at the Dominican Convent at Sparkhill, N.Y. in the Archdiocese of New York. The one-day workshop on "Homophobia" was sponsored by New Ways and an ad hoc group called the Catholic Coalition of Religious and Priests Ministering to and with Lesbian and Gay Persons.

Among the clerical and religious homosexual activists featured at workshop was Capuchin Father Richard Cardarelli who told his audience that his pro-homosexual activities had led to the removal of his priestly faculties in the Archdiocese of New York. He said he was also banned from visiting his alma mater, a Catholic boys' high school in Middleton, Conn., after a front-page article in the *Hartford Courant* detailed his life as a homosexual religious.<sup>300</sup>

In 2001, Father Cardarelli left the Capuchin Order and the Roman Catholic Church altogether. He became a "bishop" of the American Apostolic Catholic Church, an ecumenical community based in Yarmouth, Mass. He eventually left the American Apostolic Church. At last sighting, he was seeking to be incardinated into the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut.<sup>301</sup>

The female side of the ledger appeared to fare better than their male counterparts.

Sister Judith Whitacre, a self-outed lesbian who also spoke at the Sparkhill conference said she was a nun in good standing with the Sisters of St. Joseph. She told a local reporter covering the conference that "When I hear people say, 'I don't care if you're a lesbian, it's nobody's business,' I feel a call to be invisible," she told a local reporter covering the event, but "I don't want to be invisible. ...It's everybody's business."<sup>302</sup>

Sister Jeannine Gramick who also spoke at the Sparkhill gathering joined Sister Whitacre in addressing the "pain and suffering" she has met at the hands of the "institutionalized" Church.

In mid-October 1991, Gramick and Nugent brought their "Homophobia in Religion and Society" road show to four Catholic dioceses in the southwest region of Pennsylvania—Pittsburgh, Greensburg, Altoona-Johnstown,

and Youngstown (Ohio). The nun and priest came armed with letters of recommendation to the Ordinaries of the dioceses from the following bishops who wanted their names kept secret:

- Bishop Kenneth J. Povish, Diocese of Lansing, Mich.
- Bishop John McRaith, Diocese of Owensboro, Ky.
- Aux. Bishop Thomas Costello, Diocese of Syracuse, N.Y.
- Bishop Francis A. Quinn, Diocese of Sacramento, Calif.
- Bishop Eugene J. Gerber, head of the Wichita Diocese provided a letter of recommendation to Gramick and Nugent in 1990, but it was later withdrawn from circulation.

Opposition to the Gramick and Nugent “homophobia” road show was organized by the U.S. Coalition for Life (USCL) of Export (Pittsburgh), Pa., headed by this writer.

The USCL offensive included a letter writing campaign to Church officials in the four targeted dioceses and to the Holy See, as well as the superiors of the religious orders who were hosting Gramick and Nugent. It was backed up by a saturated media blitz in the secular press.

In a pre-conference interview that made the front page of the *Pittsburgh Press* on October 5, 1991, the unhappy Nugent charged Randy Engel, the Director of the USCL, with having “a classic case of homophobia.”<sup>303</sup> He told the *PP* reporter that “We try to uphold the positive things the church says about gay and lesbian people ...The views of revisionist theologians will be presented along with official church teachings.”<sup>304</sup>

The first of the four diocesan workshops was scheduled to take place in the Pittsburgh Diocese on October 12, 1991 at St. Mary’s Convent on the Carlow College campus operated by the Sisters of Mercy.

In a letter to the USCL, Sister Sheila Carney, RSM, President of Carlow College, defended the Sisters of Mercy’s sponsorship of Nugent and Gramick, by citing the Vatican’s 1986 *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons* that condemned making homosexual persons the object of violent malice in speech or in action.<sup>305</sup>

Sister Carney stated that the workshop on homophobia attempts to address this kind of attitudinal violence by helping persons recognize the negative consequences of our fears of persons who are in any way different from ourselves. “Our hosting of this program constitutes neither ‘a violation of Vatican directives on homosexuality’ nor a ‘homosexualist scandal at St. Mary’s Convent in Pittsburgh,’ as your memo suggests,” she said. “It is, rather, reflective of our community’s commitment to promote the dignity of all persons.”<sup>306</sup>

In a statement to the *Pittsburgh Press*, Sister Sally Witt, Director of Communication for the Pittsburgh-based Sisters of Mercy, confirmed that every member of the community was informed about the workshop and

no one questioned it. "Randy Engel is the only one who has objected to it," she said.<sup>307</sup>

Fr. Ronald Lengwin, spokesman for the Pittsburgh Diocese told a *Wanderer* reporter that Bishop Donald Wuerl was not convinced the workshop would violate Church doctrine. "We have been assured," said Lengwin, "that the presentation would not be contrary to the teaching of the Church. We live within that level of trust."<sup>308</sup> Lengwin added that Bishop Wuerl could not cancel the program because it was being held on property owned by the Sisters of Mercy and it was not church property.

This is, of course, sheer nonsense. All religious orders remain in a diocese at the good pleasure of the Ordinary of the diocese and it was within Wuerl's power, had he chosen to exercise it, to tell the Sisters of Mercy to cancel the event or, at the very least, relocate it off campus.

The Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Brooklyn reacted against the USCL criticism of Gramick and Nugent with a letter to Randy Engel affirming the event. "How gracious of the Sisters of Mercy to extend hospitality to this group! The Leadership Team of the Brooklyn Regional Community of Sisters of Mercy of the Americas affirms their action and wishes them well."<sup>309</sup>

Although the Gramick and Nugent workshop went on as scheduled in Pittsburgh, the attendance was very small, due in part to the controversy created by the USCL.

The next stop for Gramick and Nugent was the Diocese of Greensburg where they were scheduled to present an identical workshop on October 14 at the Doran Hall Retreat Center on the Seton Hill College campus operated by the Sisters of Charity.

Sister Mary Ann Winters, Major Superior for the Sisters of Charity defended the presentation. She wrote the USCL that, "I hear your concerns about the workshop, but also know that it is valuable to have opportunities for dialogue and for learning about the experiences of people who are marginalized (sic) by our society. Be assured that the dignity of persons will be basic to this workshop."<sup>310</sup>

Bishop Anthony Bosco of the Greensburg Diocese told Engel that he had learned about the Gramick and Nugent workshop at Seton Hill only after the fact, and had he been consulted, he would have strongly disapproved of the seminar. He said that he had expressed his views to the Sisters of Charity.

Nevertheless, when the USCL asked Bishop Bosco to warn Catholics against attending the conference, Vicar General Fr. Roger Statnick, spokesman for the diocese, said the diocese would not attack the program because it did not want to draw attention to it. Statnick did say that the presenters' position "is not the mainline position of the Church, which we would like to be the primary message given there. But we are not going to

make any judgment of the presenters in terms of their personal morality or orthodoxy.”

In a letter dated October 9, 1991, to the USCL, Bishop Bosco confirmed Fr. Statnick’s statement. He said that drawing attention to the seminar would be “counterproductive.”<sup>311</sup>

As was the case with the Sisters of Mercy-sponsored workshop in Pittsburgh, attendance at the Seton Hill workshop was small, mostly Sisters of Charity nuns, a few priests and laymen and two reporters including this writer.

The third presentation by Gramick and Nugent took place in Canfield, Ohio in the Diocese of Youngstown at the Education Center of the Ursuline nuns. The event was picketed by the Youngstown Friends of Life chapter much to the delight of some of the older Ursuline nuns. The demonstration was organized by Rev. William Witt, whose observations on “the odd couple” have already been noted.

On October 7, 1991, a reporter from the Youngstown newspaper, *The Vindicator* was told by Ursuline Sister Isabel Rudge that despite opposition, the Nugent and Gramick workshop on “homophobia” would go on as scheduled on October 9. She said she was impressed by the workshop the Maryland group put on several years ago. “The people who are doing the presenting are in good standing in the church and religious community,” said Rudge.<sup>312</sup>

The Vicar for Pastoral Life and Worship for the Diocese of Youngstown, Rev. Bradford N. Helman, said he had investigated the seminar and found it had good credentials and had received high recommendations from bishops of other dioceses. “They are teaching Catholic morality regarding these sexual issues that are going to be the topic of their workshop,” Helman said. Bishop James W. Malone, former President of the NCCB was unavailable for comment.

In a follow-up story on the “homophobic” workshop at the Ursuline Center, Leon Stennis, religion editor of *The Vindicator*, identified Gramick and Nugent as being associated with the Center for Homophobia Education in Hyattsville, Md.

Sister Gramick explained to Stennis how she came to be involved in a homosexual ministry. In this revised version of her encounter with Dominic Bash, the nun says she became concerned when she met a young man who was disgruntled with the church because he said it had no place for his brother, who was a homosexual.<sup>313</sup>

The fourth and final workshop was scheduled to take place on October 15, 1991 at the Diocesan Family Life Center of the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese.

A week earlier, *The Tribune-Democrat* in Johnstown ran the complete USCL press release opposing the Gramick and Nugent workshop. Diocesan officials were visibly upset about the controversy.

A reporter for the newspaper said that Nugent had told him in a phone conversation that both he and Sister Gramick still retained their church credentials. When pressed for more information, Nugent would only say that his current parish was in northwest Pennsylvania. The reporter did some research on his own and found that both Nugent and Gramick had been ordered by the Vatican in the late 1980s to withdraw from New Ways, and that they were not permitted to work in gay-lesbian ministry.<sup>314</sup>

The article triggered a long series of responses from the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown beginning with a letter to the USCL from Sr. Marilyn Welch, Director of the Family Life Office, who stated that the decision to permit the "Homophobia in Religion and Society" workshop was made "after careful thought and discussion."<sup>315</sup> "Reviewing several references from other dioceses indicated to us that the presentations provided in other workshops were orthodox in regard to the teachings of the Catholic Church," she said.<sup>316</sup> Sr. Welch then quoted from *To Live In Christ Jesus*—that "homosexual persons, like everyone else, should not suffer from prejudice against their basic human rights." She said the diocese would not cancel the workshop which "we believe supports the basic teachings of the Catholic Church."<sup>317</sup>

On September 25, 1991, the Rev. Dennis R. Boggs, Secretary to Bishop Joseph V. Adamec, confirmed Sister Welch's position in a letter to the USCL.<sup>318</sup>

Later, the USCL received a strange letter from Rev. Msgr. George B. Flinn, the Chancellor for the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese, dated October 7, 1991. Msgr. Flinn said that Bishop Adamec had read the USCL documentation against Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent and that he (Adamec) "reconfirms his adherence to the official Church teaching with regard to human sexuality."<sup>319</sup>

The Flinn letter was in turn followed by a lengthy correspondence from the Very Rev. Stanley B. Carson, Vicar General of the diocese who expressed disapproval that the USCL had used *The Tribune-Democrat* to protest the Gramick and Nugent workshop since the newspaper had an anti-Catholic bias. "Your decision to publicly disagree with a diocesan decision will probably be used as fuel to keep the fire of anti-Catholic bias alive and burning," he said.<sup>320</sup>

Rev. Carson said he had received letters of reference from four bishops who "have verified the orthodoxy of the presentations made during the workshops by Sr. Jeannine Gramick and Fr. Robert Nugent." "We have no information that would lead us to believe that the program 'Homophobia in Religion and Society,' violates the intention and letter of Church teaching..." he said. According to Rev. Carson, the diocese did not publicize the workshop "since it was intended for persons in leadership positions (not the general laity)."<sup>321</sup>



The response from Vatican officials to the USCL protest against the latest in a series of Gramick and Nugent road shows was *pro forma*. A letter dated September 30, 1991 was received by the USCL from the Washington office of the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio signed by Agostino Cardinal Cacciavillan who acknowledged receipt of the USCL documents against Gramick and Nugent and that they were “duly noted.”<sup>322</sup> A second letter dated November 8, 1991, was received from the Vatican Secretariat of State. It acknowledged the USCL complaint and said that the documents had been “duly noted.” It was signed by Msgr. C. Sepe, Assessor, Secretariat of State First Section General Affairs.<sup>323</sup>

Thus ended the battle between the U.S. Coalition for Life and Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent and the four Catholic dioceses in the fall of 1991.

The Gramick and Nugent road show rolled on.

### **“H-O-M-O-P-H-O-B-I-A: Is It Catching?”**

The 1992 New Year found Gramick and Nugent in Cajun country. On January 31 they gave a multi-diocesan “Homophobia” workshop in the Catholic Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.

Dominican Sister Paul Richard, the pastoral associate of St. Bernadette Soubirous Church in Houma and diocesan superintendent of the Office of Religious Education, attended the Nugent and Gramick seminar. The nun later described her transforming experience for readers of the diocesan paper, *The Bayou Catholic*.

In her article, “H-O-M-O-P-H-O-B-I-A: Is It Catching?” Sr. Richard said that most common folk suffer from some form of the dreaded disease “homophobia.” And what is the source of this contagion? “Homophobia is usually based on ignorance ...on succumbing to stereotypes ...the result of some psychologically hidden factors within ourselves which have gone undetected for years!” the nun wrote.<sup>324</sup>

The bias against homosexuality and homosexuals, she explained, is evident in such “cliches” as “Homosexuality is a sin, because the Bible says so; homosexuality is a sin because it’s against the natural law of God” or “...homosexuality is a sin because it spreads AIDS.”<sup>325</sup>

“As the day progressed,” said Sr. Richard, “I saw slowly developing before me what Sister Jeannine and Father Nugent were trying so desperately to tell us. And we were listening at last! They showed us in their simple, dedicated way that “homophobia” is an unwarranted fear of homosexuality in oneself or in others.”<sup>326</sup>

“And how do we detect ‘homophobia’?” she asked. “According to the workshop directors, it can show up in language and tone ...in the reasons and the rhetoric of opposition to gay and lesbian rights ...in the myths we continue to accept and circulate about homosexual people ...in some religious teachings on homosexuality which reflect a fundamentalistic interpretation of Scripture ...and it can show up in our silence and neglect of

these people in our churches and society,” Sr. Richard said.<sup>327</sup>

As for the remedy for “homophobia,” Sister Richard offered two words — “Reaching out.”<sup>328</sup>

New Ways held its “Third National Symposium on Lesbian and Gay People and Catholicism: The State of the Question” in Chicago on March 27–29, 1992. Five hundred people attended the event including three members of the American hierarchy, Bishop William Hughes of Covington, Ky., Bishop Kenneth Untener of Saginaw, Mich. and Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, now an auxiliary to Archbishop Maida in Detroit. Of the 91 organizations represented at the conference, 76 were religious congregations of men and women including the Conference for Catholic Lesbians that had been inspired by a lesbian workshop given by Sr. Gramick a decade before.<sup>329</sup>

In the summer of 1992, with Nugent and Gramick working behind the political scenes, New Ways launched “Project Civil Rights” as a protest against the recently released Vatican document *Some Considerations Concerning the Catholic Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons*. New Ways charged that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith opposed civil rights for lesbians and gays in the area of teaching, athletic coaching, adoptive parenting and military recruitment.

New Ways prepared a position paper titled “A Time to Speak—Catholics for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights” that appeared as a paid advertisement in the November 13, 1992 issue of the *National Catholic Reporter*. “A Time to Speak” claimed that homosexuals make excellent coaches, that homosexuals love children, and that gays can serve effectively in the military.

New Ways also circulated petitions to be presented to the American bishops at their annual Washington, D.C. meeting in November 1992. The petitions called for a special pastoral program for sodomites and asked that the topics of homosexuality and “homophobia” be added to the NCCB/USCC agenda for 1993. The always cooperative Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk, President of the NCCB, instructed Bishop James Malone to receive the signed 13,160 petitions.<sup>330</sup>

The year 1993 passed quickly with Gramick and Nugent continuing their writings and “homophobia” workshops.

One of their workshops took place on May 13 at the Paulist-staffed Pope John XXIII Catholic Center at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. During her lecture, Gramick reiterated her claim that the “sin of homophobia” is worse than homogenital activity.<sup>331</sup>

The Gramick and Nugent road show kept rolling on.

## The Reactivation of the Maida Commission

On January 24 1994, to their shock and dismay, Gramick and Nugent, who had just returned from a sabbatical at the Catholic University of

Louvain, and their religious superiors, received word that the Maida Commission, which they believed had self-destructed, was ready to begin its formal proceedings—five years and nine months after Archbishop Pio Laghi had appointed the three-member task force.<sup>332</sup>

Incredibly, the Gramick and Nugent Case would drag on for seven more years before a partial resolution of the conflict was reached, bringing the total number of years of “investigation” of the pair to thirteen. During the interim period, Bishop Maida had been installed as the fourth Archbishop of Detroit on June 12, 1990. Like John Cardinal Dearden and Edmund Cardinal Szoka before him, Archbishop Maida took no disciplinary action against Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton who was permitted to continue his role as an advisor to New Ways.

The following is a general timetable for proceedings of the reactivated Maida Commission and the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICL) and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) that eventually assumed control of the case after the Maida Commission had filed its report with Rome in 1995.

Except for some preliminary communication that went on between the Commission and the defendants and their religious superiors from March 1988 to late May 1989, the members of the Commission had only met for one three-day meeting prior to the reactivation of the Commission in January 1994.

For the convenience of the reader, the notes that record the programs and activities of Gramick and Nugent and their supporters from the time the Maida Commission begins its formal inquiry until the Holy See delivers its verdict on Father Nugent and Sister Gramick are set in a different type face.



## The Maida Commission Timetable and Notes 1994–2001

### 1994

January 24—Commission Chairman Maida asks the defendants, Sister Jeannine Gramick and Father Robert Nugent and their religious superiors to a March 18 procedural meeting.

January 26—Gramick and Nugent submit statement to the Commission containing selected passages from *Building Bridges*.

February 14—In a letter to Eduardo Cardinal Martinez Somalo, Prefect for the CICL in Rome, the defendants protest the procedures and make-up of the Maida Commission and continue to meet with their superiors.

## THE RITE OF SODOMY

- February 25—Vatican informs Gramick's immediate superior, Sr. Patricia Flynn, SSND, that the Commission stands as is.
- March 15—General Superior Sr. Patricia Flynn protests the presence of Dr. Janet Smith on the Commission.
- March 18—First meeting in Detroit is held to examine procedures to be used in the investigation. Walter Hurley, a staff member for the Commission is in attendance. Gramick and Nugent and their superiors, Sr. Christine Mulcahy, SSND, and Fr. Portland, SDS, continue to protest the composition of the Commission. Protest is noted and dismissed. The Commission agrees to use *Building Bridges*, written in 1992 by Gramick and Nugent, as the primary document of its investigation along with other materials from New Ways workshops and seminars. Gramick and Nugent affirm that *Building Bridges* is the most representative of their works. They state they were at the hearing under duress. The objection to the proceedings is noted.
- March 28—Sister Christine Mulcahy files a protest against Commission member Dr. Janet Smith on the basis that she lacks "pastoral experience." Protest is noted and dismissed.
- April—The month is taken up with providing the defendants' superiors with technical papers related to the hearings. Commission members query Nugent and Gramick on the meaning and implications of statements in *Building Bridges*. All responses are to be made in writing.
- May 11—The Detroit Archdiocese issues a press release on the Maida Commission.
- May 25—A second hearing is held in Detroit with Gramick and Nugent in the presence of two of their three advisors.
- June 9—Commission reviews New Ways workshop handouts provided by Nugent and Gramick. It sends additional queries to defendants on the nature of their ministry to homosexuals.
- June 24—Nugent and Gramick respond in writing to questions posed by the Commission.
- July 23—Archbishop Fagiolo on behalf of the Prefect for the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life sends a letter to each defendant containing a copy of the Maida Commission's preliminary findings and recommendations to the Congregation.
- July 26—Third meeting on procedures and substance related to canonical issues is held in Detroit. In addition to their religious provincials, Sr. Christine Mulcahy, SSND and Fr. Dennis Thiessen, SDS, and former Provincial Fr. Paul Portland, the defendants have their advisors present—Bishop John Snyder, Bishop of St. Augustine, Fla., Rev. Bruce Williams,

OP, and Dr. James Hanigan, Chairman of the Theology Department, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh.<sup>333</sup> The advisors will help formulate the defendants' responses to the Commission and the Holy See. Msgr. Leonard Scott, Judicial Vicar, Diocese of Camden, is also present. Bishop John Snyder offers personal testimony on Nugent and Gramick's presentation in his diocese. He states the nun and priest were "positive ... in terms of the doctrinal content, and especially in terms of their sensitivity and awareness of the pastoral needs of gays and lesbians." During the meeting it is agreed that Gramick's name on an ad in the *National Catholic Reporter* for Mary's Pence, the feminist alternative to the Vatican's Peter's Pence collection, would not be a consideration at the hearings.

August 31—The media are advised that three meetings of the Commission with the defendants have taken place in Detroit. The defense team requests access to all the correspondence received by the Maida Commission. The members of the defense team are informed that only 11 of the 250 responses received by the Commission were written in opposition to Nugent and Gramick. Access to the actual correspondence to the Commission is denied.

October 4—The Maida Commission's "Report of the Findings of the Commission Studying the Writings and Ministry of Sister Jeannine Gramick, SSND and Father Robert Nugent, SDS" is made public.<sup>334</sup>

The Maida Commission expresses praise for the defendants "courage and zeal" and for the "love and compassion" that Nugent and Gramick have exhibited in their "important and needed ministry." It finds, however, that some of their views on homosexual behavior as expressed in *Building Bridges* are ambiguous and doctrinally deficient or erroneous.

The Commission states that while Gramick and Nugent were ordered by the Holy See to separate themselves from New Ways Ministry in 1984, they did not do so.

The Commission concludes that while it "clearly recognizes the value of certain aspects of their ministry ... it is obligated to point out the other significant areas that are problematic."

The complete report of the Maida Commission to the Holy See, that includes the official minutes of the three Detroit meetings, press releases on the Commission, a copy of *Building Bridges*, and the recommendations of the Commission were not made public.

October 11—Defendants and their U.S. superiors receive copy of Maida Commission Report.

November 9—Sr. Christine Mulcahy informs Archbishop Maida she is disappointed in the Commission Report.

## 1995

January 1—Fr. Nugent's new superior, Father Dennis Thiessen opposes the Commission Report.

*Sr. Jeannine Gramick, the Director of the Lesbian/Gay Ministry for the Baltimore Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame plays yenta to a group of lesbian women religious in the Baltimore-Washington area. The result is the founding of Womanjourney Weavings—a forum newsletter for lesbian religious issued by New Ways Ministry.*

January 11—Sr. Christine Mulcahy reiterates her opposition to the Maida Commission Report. She says it made possible misleading inferences. She also complains that Gramick and Nugent's superiors were not given copies of the Commission's recommendations to the Holy See, nor were they made privy to the disciplinary action the Commission recommended to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

January 12, 25—Gramick and Nugent respond to the Maida Commission Report.<sup>335</sup> In a lengthy statement they dispute the overall charge of the Commission that they have not supported the Church's teachings on homosexuality. They claim that they were denied due process and suffered at the hands of prejudicial and insensitive inquisitors. Attached to their response were letters of support for their ministry from 19 American bishops—Bishop Thomas J. Costello (1987), Bishop Francis A. Quinn (1989), Bishop John J. McRaith (1989), Bishop Kenneth J. Povish (1991), Bishop Leroy T. Matthiesen (1992) (1994), Bishop Gerald O'Keefe (1994), Bishop Joseph L. Imesch (1994), Bishop Lawrence L. McNamara (1994), Bishop Charles A. Buswell (1994), Bishop Walter F. Sullivan (1994), Bishop William A. Hughes (1994), Bishop Robert F. Morneau (1994), Bishop Raymond A. Lucker (1994), Bishop Matthew H. Clark (1994), Bishop William Friend (1994), Bishop John S. Cummins (1994), Bishop P. Francis Murphy (1994), Bishop Frank J. Rodimer (1994), and Bishop Peter A. Rosazza (1994).

February 12—Sr. Patricia Flynn writes to the CICL in Rome in support of Sr. Gramick's ministry and expresses a willingness to be of aid to the Congregation. She is notified by letter that the Congregation has sufficient materials on which to make a sound judgment in the case.

February 22—Gramick and Nugent respond in writing to the Maida Commission Report and its findings. The response contains their views on the "naturalness" of homosexuality, the nature of homosexual acts, homosexuality as an inborn condition, the role of the social sciences in illuminating new insights into homosexual behavior, and the overwhelming support for Gramick and Nugent and their homosexual ministry by Catholic religious orders and diocesan bishops.

October 4—Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Cardinal Maida's auxiliary, receives New Ways' "Bridge Building Award" for his advocacy of "gay rights" and defense of Dignity and New Ways.

## 1996

The Maida Commission Report is received by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICL) in late 1995 or early 1996. Because of grave doctrinal questions related to Gramick and Nugent's writings, the CICL turns the case over to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Gramick and Nugent and their superiors do not learn of this change, however, until late 1997.

February 22—The CICL asks Gramick and Nugent to respond in writing to three questions related to: homosexual orientation, heterosexuality v. homosexuality, and moral limitation.

November—Nugent's article "Reaching Out To Parents of Homosexuals" appears in *Liguorian* magazine. The author is billed as the coordinator of the Catholic Parents Network. The headquarters for the CPN is listed as 637 Dover Street, Nugent's residence. Nugent is also listed as a consultant for the NCCB Committee that drafted "Always Our Children."<sup>336</sup>

## 1997

Nugent and Gramick learn that Rome is reviewing other texts besides *Building Bridges* including their newest book *Voices of Hope* (1995).

March 7–9 —New Ways holds its "Fourth National Symposium on The Teaching Church/Teaching the Church" in Pittsburgh, Pa. The conference receives the endorsement of numerous religious orders including the School Sisters of Notre Dame (Baltimore Province), SSND (Chicago Provincial Council, Mankato Provincial Council, and the Wilson, Conn. Provincial Council), the Loretto Community, and Sisters of the Divine Savior (Salvatorian Sisters/North American Province).

April 11–13—Gramick and Nugent under the auspices of the Catholic Parents Network, conduct a retreat for parents of homosexuals.

May 30–June 13—Gramick and Nugent host a Catholic Parents Network retreat in Ronkonkoma, Long Island, NY. The event is promoted in the newsletter of the National Association of Catholic Diocesan Lesbian & Gay Ministries. NACDLGM maintains close relations with the NCCB/USCC.

October 24—Twenty years after the creation of New Ways Ministry, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with the approval of the pope, issues a formal *contestatio* that declares the writings of Gramick

and Nugent contain grave errors and represent a clear and present danger to the faithful. In "Erroneous and Dangerous Propositions in the Publications *Building Bridges* and *Voices of Hope*," the Holy See declares that "...the work of the two religious often involves a studied ambiguity regarding a faithful presentation of the truth of the Church teaching on homosexuality and, thus, does a disservice to the Church, to those engaged in the pastoral care of homosexual persons and to those seeking guidance from the Church. It can never be forgotten that 'only what is true can ultimately be pastoral. The neglect of the Church's position prevents homosexual men and women from receiving the care they need and to which they have a right.'" <sup>337</sup>

December 19—Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, Secretary to the CDF meet with General Superiors Patricia Flynn, SSND, and Rev. Karl Hoffman, SDS, in Rome. Ratzinger informs them that the case of Fr. Nugent and Sr. Gramick has been transferred from the CICL to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith because grave doctrinal issues were involved in their writings.

## 1998

February 5—Sr. Gramick responds to the CDF *contestatio* of October 24, 1997. She holds that the Catholic Church will ultimately change its position on the intrinsic sinfulness of homosexuality citing the Vatican's 1975 document *Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics*, that affirmed four basic tenets favorable to homosexuality: 1) it made a distinction between orientation and act 2) it distinguished between the temporary homosexual and the permanent or constitutional homosexual 3) it supported homosexual rights, dignity and special pastoral care and 4) it attacked unjust discrimination and violence against homosexuals as dual evils. <sup>338</sup>

February 6—Fr. Nugent files his response to the CDF *contestatio* of October 24, 1997. Attached to this document was a letter from Fr. Karl Hoffman stating he believed that Nugent should be free to continue his ministry to homosexuals. <sup>339</sup>

February 10—Sr. Patricia Flynn, Gramick's superior, informs the CDF that she has asked Gramick to correct the errors in her writings on homosexuality. Rev. Karl Hoffman, SDS Superior General in Rome, informs the CDF that Nugent wants to continue his ministry.

February 12—Sr. Patricia Flynn, requests another meeting with Vatican officials.

February 22—Sr. Flynn's request is denied.

May 4—Gramick and Nugent conduct a workshop sponsored by the Catholic Parents Network and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays



(PFLAG) for parents of homosexuals and clergy, religious and laymen at the Christ Episcopal Church in Dayton, Ohio. Gramick explains how she and Nugent have continued to influence the NCCB/USCC. She tells her audience that the original draft of “Always Our Children” stated that homosexual acts are not sinful if a person prays before engaging in them and reaches the judgment that such acts are not sinful. This sentence was edited out of the final draft, she said, because certain bishops felt that it would not pass through the Administrative Committee of the NCCB.<sup>340</sup>

May 6, 20—An Ordinary Session of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith finds Nugent’s and Gramick’s responses to the Congregation unsatisfactory. The Congregation decides that the defendants should sign a “Profession of Faith” in which they declare their interior assent to the teachings of the Catholic Church on homosexuality and to acknowledge *Building Bridges* and *Voices of Hope* contain errors.

### ❧ “Profession of Faith” ❧

*With firm faith I believe that God, in creating human beings as male and female, has created them equal as persons and complementary as male and female. In marriage, they are united by God and become “one flesh” (Gn 2:24), in a union that is by its very nature ordered to the procreation and education of offspring (cf. Gn 1:28) and to the good of the spouses (cf. Gaudium et spes 12, 48–51; Familiaris consortio 11–15; Mulieris dignitatem 6–7; Codex Iuris Canonici can 1055; Catechism of the Catholic Church 371–372).*

*I firmly accept and hold that every baptized person, “clothed with Christ” (Gal 3:27), is called to live the virtue of chastity according to his particular state of life; married persons are called to live conjugal chastity; all others must practice chastity in the form of continence. Sexual intercourse may take place only within marriage (cf. Persona humana 7, 11–12; Familiaris consortio 11; Catechism of the Catholic Church 2348–2350).*

*I also firmly accept and hold that homosexual acts are always objectively evil. On the solid foundation of a constant biblical testimony, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity (cf. Gn 19:1–29; Lv 18:22, 10:13; Rm 1:24–27; I Cor 6:10; 1 Tim 1:10). Tradition has always declared that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered (cf. Persona humana 8; Homosexualitatis problema 3–8; Catechism of the Catholic Church 2357, 2396).*

*I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teaching that the homosexual inclination, though not in itself a sin, constitutes a tendency towards behavior that is intrinsically evil, and therefore must be considered objectively disordered (homosexualitatis problema 3; Catechism of the Catholic Church 2358).*

*I also adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teaching that, while homosexual persons must be received with respect and protected from all unjust forms of discrimination, no one can claim any right to engage in homosexual behavior (cf. Persona humana 8; Homosexualitatis problema 9–10; Catechism of the Catholic Church 2358).*

*Moreover, I also adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teaching that homosexual persons, by the virtues of self-mastery which lead to inner freedom, by prayer and sacramental grace and other forms of assistance, can advance toward Christian perfection (Homosexualitatis problema 12; Catechism of the Catholic Church 2359).<sup>341</sup>*



June 27—Sr. Rosemary Howarth, the newly installed General Superior of the SSND in Rome, informs Gramick that her response to the *contestatio* is unsatisfactory to the CDF. Gramick refuses to give any assent, whatsoever, to the teaching of the Church on homosexuality.

July 4—Rev. Karl Hoffman in Rome informs Nugent that his response to the *contestatio* is unsatisfactory to the CDF. Nugent formulates his own version of the “Proclamation of Faith” with elements that are contrary to Church teachings on homosexuality.

July 29—Gramick files another response to her unsatisfactory *contestatio* with the CDF.

August 6—Nugent responds from London, England where he is on a six-month sabbatical. He writes that he stands by the corrections he made to the CDF’s Profession of Faith. He stated that he had never been charged with public dissent from magisterial teachings. Nugent concludes that he takes full responsibility for any failures in his writings and any harm coming from his actions or writings. He states he accepts the Church’s doctrine contained in *Persona Humana* (1975), *Homosexualitatis problema* (1986) and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) and the adherence that is due to it.

Fall—In an article titled “Addressing Celibacy Issues with Gay and Lesbian Candidates” in *Horizon*, the Journal of the National Religious Vocation Conference, Nugent attacks the idea that “One size fits all,” when working with seminarians who have different backgrounds including different “sexual orientation.” He is critical of a “...highly idealized or over spiritualized celibacy formation program not in touch with the concepts, language and sexual realities of these diverse individuals.”<sup>342</sup>

December 22—Rev. Karl Hoffman, SDS, tells Nugent his clarifications are not acceptable to the CDF. A deadline of two weeks is set by the CDF for Nugent to sign the “Profession of Faith.”

## 1999

January 25—Nugent sends a letter to Archbishop Bertone, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome. He states that he will not sign the “Profession of Faith” of the CDF and instead submits an alternative document that is rejected by the CDF. He says he wants the investigation to end and his ministry to homosexuals to continue.

February 11—*Gramick and Nugent present a seminar on “Always Our Children” under the auspices of the Catholic Parents Network in Springfield, Ill, at the invitation of homosexual Bishop Daniel Ryan. They also give the same presentation in Palm Beach, Fla. under homosexual Bishop Joseph K. Symons.*

May 14—Pope John Paul II approves of CDF “Notification” on Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent and orders it printed.

July 1—Fr. Nugent and Sr. Gramick are summoned to Rome by their superiors.

July 9—Archbishop Vincent Fagiolo sends an advance copy of the CDF “Notification” document to the President of the NCCB/USCC.

July 13—The Vatican releases the 1,700 word statement of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued on May 31, 1999 titled “Notification from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Regarding Sr. Jeannine Gramick, SSND and Father Robert Nugent, SDS” concerning the final disposition of the Gramick and Nugent case.<sup>343</sup> The Vatican rules that Gramick and Nugent are permanently prohibited “from any pastoral work regarding homosexual persons, and [they] are ineligible, for an undisclosed period, for any office respective of religious institutions.” No disciplinary action, however, is taken against the superiors of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Salvatorians who knowingly aided and abetted Gramick and Nugent in their homosexual apostolate for more than three decades.

In a later clarification, Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect for the CDF states that “the two religious are certainly prohibited from any involvement with workshops, retreats, liturgical celebrations and any other pastoral initiative for homosexual persons or their parents.” On the matter of their writings and publication of books, Ratzinger states that “the canonical norm presently in force, binding on all religious ... must be observed. Finally, with regard to Father Nugent, Ratzinger said that the priest may continue to preach and administer the sacraments, but not for gatherings of homosexual persons.”<sup>344</sup>

Bishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of the Diocese of Galveston, President of the NCCB, issues a statement on the disciplinary action taken by the Holy See against Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent. He declares that the American bishops “share” a commitment to homosexual ministry. Fiorenza said

that the Maida Commission did not find their ministry to homosexuals to be without “positive aspects,” and he added, “the teaching of the Church cannot be used to justify bigotry in any form.”<sup>345</sup>

Adam Cardinal Maida expresses his opinion that the juridical process used for the Maida Commission hearing was fair to the defendants and capably handled. He joined with his fellow Commissioners, Msgr. James Mulligan and Dr. Janet Smith, “in the hope and prayer that Father Nugent and Sister Gramick can find the way to accept the decision of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.”<sup>346</sup>

July 14—Nugent and Gramick, who have just returned from Rome, see the CDF notification copy for the first time. Gramick announces she is taking a one-month leave of absence for a private retreat.

July 22—*Bishop Walter Sullivan, President of Pax Christi issues press release calling upon NCCB President Joseph Fiorenza and the U.S. Catholic Bishops to appeal the Vatican’s judgment against Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent by reason of the fact that the Holy See’s negative assessment of their ministry to homosexuals runs counter to the NCCB Administrative Board’s pastoral “Always Our Children.”*<sup>347</sup>

July—*New Ways organizes a national letter write-in campaign to support Nugent and Gramick against the CDF’s “Notification.”*

July 23—Gramick issues her statement on the CDF judgment. The statement is reprinted and circulated by the Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church. In the statement, the nun tells her “story” about her early meeting of Dominic Bash. She also claims her right to privacy of conscience, and states that she has tried to follow the “common ground” model of the late Cardinal Bernardin. She pleads with unhappy homosexuals and their families not to leave Church.

August 10—Gramick consults with the General Superior, Provincial, and General Council for the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

September 23—Gramick thanks the SSND for their support. She states that her religious order evaluated her ministry to homosexuals in 1982 and 1985 and approved of it.<sup>348</sup> She claims that the Maida Commission ignored her religious superiors and intruded upon her private beliefs. She also claims that the SSND’s gay and lesbian ministry is in line with the Constitution of School Sisters of Notre Dame. She says that her order fights injustice. She tells the *National Catholic Reporter* that she will not defy the Vatican, but will “work to have [its] decision overturned.”

October 22—Gramick speaks on her experience with the Vatican and her efforts to overturn the CDF on her ministry to homosexuals at DePaul University in Chicago. She says she not only had support for New Ways from her own religious order but also from the National Conference of

Catholic Bishops. She said she attended the convention of the National Association of Catholic Diocesan Lesbian and Gay Ministry just four days earlier.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame create the Fund for Lesbian and Gay Ministry within the Baltimore Province.

## 2000

*January 30—Gramick and Nugent address the San Diego and Los Angeles chapters of Call to Action at the Mother of Good Counsel Church. The event is part of Gramick's national tour to speak up against the ban by the CDF.*

May 23–24—Gramick and Nugent are ordered to Rome by the CDF. They are both served with a formal order of silence by their superiors. The original CDF directive of July 14, 1999 was expanded by their religious superiors in Rome to include: speaking or writing about the ban or the ecclesiastical processes that led up to it; speaking or writing on matters related to homosexuality; protesting against the ban or encouraging the faithful to publicly express dissent from the official magisterium; and criticizing the magisterium in any public forum whatsoever concerning homosexuality or related issues.

May 25—Gramick responds to the silencing penalty with a public statement that opens with the line—"Society hears the pain of battered women..." She says that the Vatican has violated the principles of fair judicial procedure as outlined in the Catholic Church's document *Justice in the World* (par. 45). "I choose to obey the voice of God within me, and in this instance, the voice of God is saying that I should not collaborate with my own oppression." Gramick is warned that she could be dismissed from the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

May 26—SSND Provincial Sr. Joan Burke in Baltimore states that Gramick will follow her conscience.

May 30—Nugent agrees to accept the decision of the CDF and express his intention to implement it accordingly.

*June 16—Loretto Sister Maureen Fiedler, co-director of the Quixote Center, the parent group of New Ways, urges the superiors of the School Sisters of Notre Dame to stop cooperating with the Vatican.*

June 16—Sr. Joan Burke, SSND in Baltimore states she will oversee the activities of Sr. Gramick. Sr. Rosemary Howarth, General Superior of the SSND in Rome, informs the Holy See that the School Sisters of Notre Dame will continue their ministry to gays and lesbians.

*September 16—Gramick delivers a speech at Haverford College in Philadelphia on "The Place of Silencing in the Teaching of the Church."*

## 2001

January 5—Gramick publicly states that as a SSND nun she will not be silenced and that she will ignore the CDF sanctions of July 1999. She states that as of January 5, 2001 she had not as yet received a formal warning by her superiors.<sup>349</sup>

Nugent says he has signed the “Profession of Faith” and will ride things out. He says “Disciplinary actions and punishments ... die with the pope, and they would have to be reconfirmed by a new administration.” He is currently doing parish and adult education work.

*February 3—Gramick addresses a New Ways Conference at Christ the King Parish in Oakland, Calif. The conference is sponsored by Dignity/San Francisco/San Jose and the local chapter of Call to Action.*

*February 15–25 Gramick hosts a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Egypt.*

*May 6—During PrideFest America, “a weeklong celebration of gay and lesbian culture” held in Philadelphia, Sr. Gramick is given the “Tom Stoddard National Role Model Award” as a tribute to her campaign for civil rights for homosexuals.<sup>350</sup>*

August—Sr. Jeannine Gramick announces that she has left the School Sisters of Notre Dame and has joined the Sisters of Loretto based in Denver. The transfer spares the SSND from dismissing Gramick from their order. Gramick says her transfer to a new religious community makes the directive on silencing by her former SSND superior no longer valid. Sister Ann Coyle, former President of the Sisters of Loretto states that Gramick’s work fits with the order’s mission of peace and justice. Asked what the Loretto order will do if the Vatican tries again to silence Gramick, Coyle said, “We’ll cross that bridge when we come to it.” The Sisters of Loretto have set up a tax-deductible “Sr. Jeannine Gay Ministry Fund” to help Gramick continue her pro-homosexual activities and New Ways has a campaign to raise funds to permit Gramick to continue her work.

**This, dear reader, is about where we came in 32 years ago.**



### **Final Thoughts on the Gramick-Nugent Affair**

The “Notification” by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on May 31, 1999 was absolutely correct in its condemnation and silencing of Sister Jeannine Gramick and Father Nugent. The problem is that it was too little and too late. The damage is done and it is both incalculable and, barring a first class miracle, irreparable.

For many religious congregations already teetering on the brink of extinction after the fallout of the Second Vatican Council, the wide-scale

homosexual colonization of male religious orders and the diocesan priesthood, and the spread of lesbianism in convents and female religious orders fostered by New Ways and other members of the Homosexual Collective in the Catholic Church has proven to be the final *coup de grâce*.

There are, of course, many lingering questions about the whole affair beginning with the Maida Commission and its utter lack of competent research and investigation into the backgrounds of Gramick and Nugent and their New Ways “apostolate” which the Commission praised in a number of sections in the Report. The Commission Report quotes a number of errors found in Gramick and Nugent’s *Building Bridges*, but it failed to recognize the essential fact that New Ways is a political organization not a religious one. The Commission ignored the burning question—To what, and to whom are Sister Gramick and Father Nugent “building bridges?” Why should the Church seek to “build bridges” to the most perverse of all vices and to the Homosexual Collective that is distinguished solely by the promotion and practice of that vice? In short, the Maida Commission Report was an affront to the many faithful Catholics who have been battling against New Ways and its founders for more than 30 years.

The Holy See’s investigation was little better than that of the Maida Commission even though the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith reached the correct decision in the end. The formal contestatio “Erroneous and Dangerous Propositions in the Publications *Building Bridges* and *Voices of Hope*,” and the “Notification from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Regarding Sr. Jeannine Gramick, SSND and Father Robert Nugent, SDS” contain numerous ill-advised concessions to the Homosexual Collective within and without the Church.

There remains, of course, the \$64,000 question as to why only Sr. Gramick and Fr. Nugent were told to make the “Profession of Faith.” After all, from day one, they were egged on and supported by their respective superiors of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Salvatorians. They had the active support of at least 19 American bishops and the NCCB/USCC. Their case was argued before the Maida Commission by well-known supporters of the Homosexual Collective including the notorious Father Bruce Williams, OP, who teaches at the Angelicum in Rome and has actively supported “gay rights.” Why were these prelates and religious superiors deprived of the honor of also signing the “Profession of Faith”?

In fact, given the current state of the crisis in the universal Church, why are not *ALL* seminarians, clergy and religious at the time of their ordination as well as all bishops, cardinals and laymen in positions of higher education in Catholic universities and colleges required to make the “Profession of Faith?”<sup>351</sup> Let the signers think of it as a replacement for the “Oath Against Modernism” of Saint Pius X that Pope Paul VI discarded.

No! Better yet—let them take both!